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A LONGITUDINAL STUDY
OF THE READING HABITS
AND INTERESTS OF CHILDREN
FROM 11 to 14 YEARS.

MERRIL BROWN

This dissertation is submitted for
the degree of M. Phil.

Sponsoring establishment: Middlesex Polytechnic.

Validating Body CNAA

OCTOBER, 1980

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A longitudinal study of the reading habits and interests of children from 11 to 14 years.

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Abstract

From the starting point of the Schools Council Working Paper 52, in 1975, a small-scale longitudinal study was carried out (1975-78) with 40 children, a stable, homogeneous group from one primary school. Because of the composition of the sample no generalisations could be made to the child population as a whole.

The survey studied the voluntary reading of the children in the sample. Data was collected by questionnaire, interviews, standardised tests and an attitude scale, devised by the researcher. Some of the findings were not unexpected, but several controversial issues arose in the small-scale study. The appropriateness of always using mean scores to examine this kind of data was discussed. It was questioned whether children in fact read less because they listed less books.

Few children were non-readers. Children read more magazines and newspapers as they grew older. They were keen to read adult fiction. Boys gave up reading children's books sooner than girls did. Major influences were seen to be those of the media, of friends, of public libraries and of interested encouraging adults. Examples of different types of readers, presented as detailed case studies of individual children, comprised a major part of the study.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1. Previous Research

No full survey has been made of all the studies in children's reading interests. It is not the intention of the researcher to attempt such a survey, as such a task would be beyond the scope of this study. The reader is referred to Bamberger (1975) for a survey of the reading situation throughout the world, and to Whitehead (1977) for a survey of the more important studies of children's leisure-time reading interests.

Richard Bamberger in Promoting the Reading Habit, a UNESCO publication, compares the readership of adults and children and notes that:

"in almost every country (with the exception of the Soviet Union) usually twice as many children read as adults. The difference is even greater if one considers the difference between the life span of youth and that of adulthood: 7-16 as compared to 17-70". (Bamberger 1975)

Quoting Cleary's view (Cleary 1972) that the golden age of reading as a leisure activity lies between the ages of 8 and 13, Bamberger observes (Bamberger 1975) that it is not always possible to imbed in children reading interests and habits effective for a lifetime.

In a separate section of his report entitled Tasks for Research, Bamberger writes:

"It may be hard to believe but it is nevertheless true that systematic research on the important task of developing life-time reading habits hardly exists. For the past 80 years reading interests have been investigated, but the question of what can be done to awaken interests and strengthen habits has been ignored". (Bamberger 1975)

In the first chapter^{of} Children and their Books (1977) Frank Whitehead presents a comprehensive summary of the studies in children's reading interests up to 1970.

In all the more important studies mentioned by Whitehead (1977) researchers have been concerned with large scale surveys with large numbers of children. Some of the surveys in the United States dealt with vast numbers of pupils. Of the three surveys in the 1920's the most ambitious was by Washburne and Vogel (1926) involving over 36,000 children in 34 schools. A survey by Lazar in 1937 involved 4,300 children. Another survey by George Norvell in 1950 collected data from 50,000 children.

In Great Britain the numbers of children involved in surveys were not as vast as those in the U.S.A. Jenkinson's survey of 1938 involved 1,570 boys and 1,330 girls. Jenkinson's questionnaire was also used in New Zealand by W.J. Scott in 1942, with a sample of 3,932 pupils.

In his survey of previous research Frank Whitehead focused mainly on the large scale surveys in Great Britain since 1955, as these had most relevance for the Schools Council Study. Commenting on the studies by Carsley (1975) Lane and Lane (1967) Leng (1968) and Taylor (1970) he concluded that as all British surveys had been "local in scope and limited in scale" there was a need in the 1970's for a national survey. Carsley's study (The Interests of Children in Books, 1967) dealt only with one age group, 10-11 years. The study by M.J. Lane and K.A. Furness-Lane (1967) was conducted in one girls' Comprehensive school in London. Leng's study (Children and The Library, 1968) only involved children who were members of a public library. Taylor's study (1970) was carried out in four schools in the North Midlands, two grammar and two comprehensive schools.

Thus the Schools Council was the first national survey of its kind in Great Britain. The team wanted to draw a sample "large enough and representative enough to justify generalising the resultant findings to the country's children at large". The main part of the investigation was the use of a written questionnaire with some 8,000 children in 381 schools in England and Wales. The study drew on a national cross-section children at 3 age levels, 10+, 12+, and 14+. The questionnaire was administered in March 1971. An interim report appeared in January 1975

(Schools Council Working Paper 52) and the full report was published in November, 1977. The Schools Council team was most concerned with the amount of the childrens' voluntary book reading. In the questionnaire the children were asked to list any book or books read voluntarily in the previous month.

The report states that the findings, in relation to this question, indicate a decline in the amount of reading done by children in 1971, compared with that of the children in the Jenkinson survey of 1940; and also indicate a decline in the amount of book reading by children as they grow older. The report stresses the "disturbing" aspect of the number of non-book-readers (i.e. children who listed no books read in the previous month). The percentage of non-book-readers increased with the age of the three groups studied. Among the girls it was 9.4% at 10+, 23.3% at 12+, rising to 32.4% at 14+. Among the boys the figures were 15.8% at 10+, 32.2% at 12+ and 40% at 14+.

At the other end of the scale, half of the children at 10+ and one third of the children at 14+, had read 3 or more books in the previous month. The average number of books read by each child in the sample ranged from 2.95 at 10+, through 2.21 at 12+ to 1.95 at 14+.

The three factors identified in the report as those most strongly identified with the amount of book reading, were sex, social class and ability and attainment. The findings of the report indicated that^{at} all ages girls read more than boys and there were fewer non-book-readers among the girls than the boys. Also in all groups, children with fathers in non-manual occupations read more than those with fathers in manual occupations. In all groups those children rated high for ability and attainment tended to read more books and there were fewer non-readers among them.

The report discussed home and school variables associated with book reading, and the diversity of the reading of the children in the survey.

It also examined the amount of the children's television viewing, a

factor not taken into account in previous studies. The report has been subject to some criticisms. After the appearance of the interim report (Schools Council Working Paper 52, 1975) Jenkinson, writing in The Use of English (1976) criticised the design of the research, regretting that it was restricted to the age groups 10+, 12+ and 14+ and suggesting that it was wasteful to lose the opportunity presented to gain information from the 16+ and 18+ groups. He thought the team might have sounded a wider range by choosing 11+, 13+, 15+ and 17+.

Mark Jenkinson in the same issue of The Use of English (1976), asks "Does it help teachers?", suggesting that it is a weakness of the report that it fails to particularise helpfully about good practice.

In the final report of Children and their Books (1977) the Schools Council research team acknowledged that any survey of this kind must have limitations. Some of these are mentioned in the relevant sections of this study. In the conclusion of the Schools Council report, Frank Whitehead suggests that the survey should be seen as an exploratory one, and expresses the view that it will have established a baseline for children's voluntary reading, which may serve as a starting point to further small-scale research, and as a guideline for monitoring, at regular intervals, this aspect of children's reading, recommending that the survey should be repeated in 1981.

The team also acknowledged that the method used did not allow them to draw any firm conclusions about causes which produce changes in reading patterns from one age to another. In the penultimate paragraph of the study, Frank Whitehead writes:

"We suggest that what is needed now is the longitudinal study of a much smaller number of children, in order to follow through their reading over a period of several years and thereby establish the specific determining influences, whether in home, neighbourhood or school, that effect changes in children's reading habits and tastes. The insight and understanding to be gained from such a longitudinal study would be of great practical value to both teachers and children's librarians." (Whitehead 1977)

It may be that what is needed is not one longitudinal study but several studies as any one small-scale study must have its own limitations of a regional character.

Since the Schools Council study in 1971, there have been several studies of various kinds in Great Britain which may add to the interest of the findings of the survey. A survey of children's reading habits was undertaken by the National Council of Women in 1975. Surveys of adult reading interests in Britain were made by Euromonitor in 1975 and again in 1979. Of smaller studies some dealt with certain aspects of children's reading, some with certain age groups, and some are still in progress.

Small-scale research studies since 1971

The report of the survey of children's reading habits, undertaken by the National Council of Women in collaboration with the National Book League, appeared in 1975. Questionnaires were divided into two age groups, one for children aged 5-11 (answered by parents) and one for children aged 11-16 (answered by children). Just under 500 questionnaires were returned for each group. In a short summary of the most important points, the report states there was a high level of interest in books among the population surveyed, but that there was a strong sampling bias, with 70% of the children coming from homes with fathers in non-manual occupations*. The report stresses that there is a substantial minority in whose lives books mean little or nothing, and advocates certain action to promote wider reading of books among children (National Book League 1975).

There was a Euromonitor survey of British reading habits in 1975 (Euromonitor Publications 1976) and this was repeated in 1979. The surveys examined book ownership, the methods by which people obtain books, the types of books preferred by men and women, the most popular authors among men and women. The 1976 report had some references to

* Registrar General's Classification.1,2 and 3.1

children's reading, but these were brief and taken, somewhat haphazardly, from the Schools Council Interim report (Working Paper 52) and the report of the National Council of Women (Children's Reading Habits 1975). The report suggested that the British are losing any real enjoyment in the printed word, commenting:

"In the 1960's almost everyone read a book at some time or another, but a growing percentage of people now do not seem to read at all". (Euromonitor 1976)

The comment that a "growing percentage" of people do not read at all was reinforced by the figures in the Euromonitor 1979 survey.

The 1975 survey indicated that 25% of women and 36% of men no longer read books as a recreational pastime. The comparable figures in 1979 were 30% of women and 42% of men. Recreational activities recording participation were television viewing, radio listening and listening to records and tapes.

In 1975, Margaret Clark's book, Young Fluent Readers, presented her study of 32 children who were considered to be fluent readers by the age of five, and to be beyond the risk of subsequent failure. The study includes an account of the children's home background, school progress, and performance on a number of reading tests at two-yearly intervals. One of the crucial issues in a child's reading development, which emerges from this report, is the influence on the child of an interested adult who has the time and enthusiasm to help the child with his/or her reading. Dr. Clark writes:

"The richness of support for education which these families were providing was not measurable on scales such as social class, father's occupation, father's education, mother's education - or even the number of books in the house"
(Clark 1975)

Two other studies appeared in 1975. Janet E. Thirwell made an investigation into the reading of fantasy at Secondary school level, with special reference to British Isles titles since 1957. Her study includes some opinions of the children on some of the books, and some

adolescent views on fantasy.

Helen T. Allen (1975) made a study of the reading habits of a group of 14 to 16 year olds of limited ability in Birmingham. Her report examines the relationship of reading habits to early reading experience, to ability and to school background and examines reading as an adolescent activity. Allen says that most children become reluctant readers at the time of leaving junior school and entering secondary school, and she tentatively suggests that this may happen if the wrong books are provided at a crucial stage in the child's development, that is, at the beginning of adolescence. At this stage of upheaval it is possible that reading will play a secondary role. However, it can, suggests Allen, be a positive help to the child.

"At precisely this point creative reading can provide its greatest service - that of giving insight into both the adolescent himself and the type of relationship he has with others." (Allen 1975)

The report stresses the importance of providing suitable literature for adolescents, because they need to build up a group image and books can help them to identify themselves and their role in society.

S. Ray (1979) made a study of the growth of critical attitudes towards Enid Blyton since 1936 related to her popularity amongst children. The report examines evidence of this popularity and suggests reasons for it. This is of interest in view of the findings of this report on the popularity of Enid Blyton.

M. Molyneux has made a study, in Northern Ireland, (1973-77), of the teenage reading habits of a selective cross sample of secondary school children, with a critical assessment of their reading material.

There are several studies still in progress.

G. Rafferty has been studying the reading habits and tastes of groups of children in one Grammar School in Bognor Regis over a period of three years (1976-79).

J. Ewing, of Dundee College of Education, has been engaged in a two-year project (1977-79) on the measurement of attitudes towards reading of children from 8 to 15 years.

At the University of Bradford, as part of the Bradford Book Flood Experiment, a three year longitudinal record was made of children's reading between the ages of 10 and 13 years (1976-79).

Meanwhile the study reported here has been in progress since 1975, simultaneously with those of Rafferty (1976-79), Ewing (1977-79) and the Bradford experiment (1976-79).

The suggestion in the Schools Council Working Paper 52 (Whitehead et. al. 1975), that small-scale studies were needed to complement the findings of the national survey, was the starting point of this work. The researcher decided to work with a small sample of children, and to study their reading habits and interests over a period of three years.

II. The starting point of the study.

This study began in June 1975 when a pilot study was conducted with 120 children in one year-group in their last year in the primary school, and then selected a sample of 40 children, from the 120 group, for longitudinal study. The 40 children in the sample were interviewed in July 1975, and then followed through their secondary schooling until July 1978.

One aim was (as the Schools Council Working Paper 52 suggested) to follow through one small group of children over a period similar to the age group covered by the Schools' Council survey, and to attempt to identify factors which might be related to their reading habits and interests. It was expected that one of the main points of interest of the study would be a comparison of some of the findings with those of the nation-wide survey. It was intended that the investigation should study some of the same factors examined by the Schools Council project. As the concluding remarks of the research team had indicated

in the Working Paper, a small, longitudinal study might examine "specific determining influences" that may effect change in reading habits, and the researcher was concerned to select for study those aspects which she considered could be studied in greater depth in a small-scale longitudinal work, and thus complement the work of the Schools Council team.

When designing an instrument for use in the survey, the first seven questions, on the amount of comic and book reading, were the same as those on the Schools Council questionnaire.

At the outset, it was envisaged that the main differences between the small-scale study and the large-scale survey would be, firstly, that the study would be longitudinal, secondly, it would be regional, and, thirdly, it would focus in more detail on a small sample of children. Thus some factors could be studied in greater depth than would be possible in a large-scale survey, and it would be possible to look at changes in the patterns of children's reading habits, and to identify some of the influencing factors, at home and in school, which for individual children, brought about these changes.

Whereas the Schools Council survey looked at different groups of children at 10+, 12+ and 14+ the longitudinal study would follow the same small group of children from the age of 10 years to the age of 14 years, that is from their last year in the Junior school (June 1975) to the end of their third year of secondary schooling (July 1978). Obviously no exact parallels could be drawn between a small-scale study which was local and longitudinal, and a large scale project which was national, using a questionnaire administered once only, but the researcher was concerned with many of the same questions as those asked by the Schools Council research team. "What experiences, for instance, had led some children to abandon the reading of books by 14+? What experience or influences had led other children to move in their reading towards more mature or more high-quality reading?"

This study was entering its third year (1977-1978) when the full report of the Schools Council project was published in November 1977. In the

report with the additional sentence "The answers we have put forward to such important questions as these must of their very nature be tentative and provisional", the original recommendation was repeated. (Chapter 7.35.).

The researcher, like the members of the Schools Council team, can only put forward answers which are speculative and provisional. However, it is hoped that this small-scale study may, as the Schools Council team implied, offer some additional "insight and understanding" for its readers into at least some of the issues raised in the Whitehead report.

Perhaps it will also raise some new issues.

CHAPTER TWO

ELABORATION

(i) Defining the area of study

"A longitudinal study of the reading habits and interests of children from 11 to 14 years."

This study was to be longitudinal, that is extending over a length of time. The researcher chose to make the study over a period of three years.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines habit as a "settled disposition or tendency to act in a certain way, especially one acquired by frequent repetition of the same act". Thus, habit, seen as a settled practice, custom or usage, when applied, for instance, to a child's voluntary reading, is something which can be measured by means of a questionnaire administered more than once over a period of years.

With this definition in mind one could say that the Schools Council's project title "Children's Reading Habits" was a misnomer, for if the word 'habit' implies frequent repetition of the same act, or a "customary manner of acting", it would not be possible to study habit once! As the children in the Schools Council survey completed the questionnaire once only, there is no certainty that the answers reflected any one child's habit of reading. The Schools Council adopted, in their final report, the more appropriate title Children and their Books.

The study of children's reading habits includes a consideration of influencing factors, such as sex or school type.

Secondly the study was to look closely at children's reading interests. The Oxford Dictionary gives one definition of interests as "feelings of concern for, or curiosity about" something.

The word interests, however, has varying definitions and interpretations, and it may be necessary to determine the sense in which the researcher

is concerned with them here.

A.R. White (1964; 1967) has considered the analysis of concepts such as 'interest' in some depth, defining interest as:

"..... an inclination to engage in some one or more perceptual, intellectual, or practical activities that are appropriate to the particular object of interest". (1967)

or

"To feel interested in anything is to feel attracted to it; to feel inclined to give attention to it." (1964)

P.S. Wilson (1971) also discusses various concepts of the term in relation to White's philosophy, concluding that interests are "a kind of inclination or disposition". He suggests that children's interests "are fairly settled disposition which they have to notice, to pay attention to, and to engage in some appropriate activity with certain sorts of things rather than others". (Wilson 1971)

In a study of children's reading interests, this kind of aspect, being qualitative rather than quantitative, is more difficult to examine. The study of interests would, in the opinion of the researcher, involve a consideration of the child's personality, and also his attitude towards reading. It would include an examination of the titles of books listed as an indication of differences in personal choice and discussion with the child about the books read.

(ii) Aims of the Study.

Certain aspects were selected for study.

- 1) The extent of the children's voluntary reading over 3 years;
- 2) the relationship of the following factors to the amount read,
(a) sex (b) social class and (c) ability and attainment;
- 3) the influence of school type on the amount read;
- 4) the amount of the children's voluntary reading in relation to the factors of personality and attitude towards reading.

(iii) Discussion of the aims of the study in relation to the Schools' Council report.

1. To examine the extent of the voluntary reading of the 40 children in the sample.

The first aim of the Schools' Council study was "to find out how much voluntary reading children do today".

This study also aims to find out how much reading the children do, but also to look for changes in the patterns of their reading. The main differences between the studies are (a) that this study is local, (b) that it is longitudinal and (c) that the questionnaires were completed at different times of the year.

2. To examine the influencing factors of (a) sex, (b) social class, (c) ability and attainment.

(a) Sex

The Schools Council team reported that of all the contributory factors "the first of these is sex - at all ages girls read more books than boys and at the same time there are fewer non-book readers among the girls than among the boys" (p.273).

In the small-scale study the sample consisted of twenty girls and twenty boys. There were ten girls^{and} ten boys in the mixed comprehensive school, matched with ten girls and ten boys in the sub-groups in other schools. Thus, it would be possible for the researcher to make a comparison of the amount of book reading done by the 20 girls and 20 boys overall, then attempt a closer analysis of the sub-groups in different schools. In the two single-sex schools this would also be linked with the influence of school type, with 5 children in each school.

(b) Social class

The Schools Council survey found a positive association between the amount of book reading and social class. The report concluded that

"for the sample as a whole children whose fathers are in a non-manual occupation are inclined to read more books than children whose fathers are in a manual occupation." For all the age and sex groups, except the 10+ boys, this finding was significant beyond the 0.1% level. (p.62).

The Schools Council survey obtained a measure of the social class of the children by classifying the father's occupation in terms of the Registrar General's Classification.

In this investigation the researcher used the same measure, choosing to make the same general division into Manual and Non-Manual in the same way as the Schools Council survey in order to compare the findings when the amount of book reading was studied in relation to the social class of the children.

The researcher hypothesised that there would be a significant relationship between social class and the number of books listed.

(c) Ability and attainment

The researcher aimed to examine closely the relationship between ability and attainment and the amount of voluntary reading.

In studying the factors of ability and attainment there seemed to be inherent weaknesses in the measures used by the Schools Council approach, which relied on teacher-rating. The survey asked teachers administering the questionnaire to rate each child on a five point scale for ability and attainment. The scale ranged from A(those capable of passing in four or five subjects at G.C.E. 'O' level) to E (backward children - those needing remedial teaching). A footnote points out that only a large secondary school with a fully comprehensive intake would be likely to have children in all five categories, and that primary schools should do their best to apply the categories to their own circumstances (See Appendix IV Children and their Books,1977).

This would be particularly difficult for teachers of the 10+ group, as they were being asked to assess a child's capability to pass 5 subjects at 'O' level in 5 years time.

It may be suggested that primary school teachers also have a different view of a child, seeing the child as a whole, whereas secondary teachers tend to be subject-orientated and would see the child in terms of his/her ability in the subject (presumably English?).

It seemed to the researcher that, if teachers were asked to rate children in this way, at best it could be a rough guide for the purposes of assessment. Teachers views would be objective and also no distinction was being made between ability (i.e. the child's mental power) and attainment (or accomplishment) in school examinations. Within the small-scale study, the 40 children in the sample would be attending five different secondary schools, and, as the study was to run for three years, they would have three different year heads and sets of subject teachers during the period of the survey. Thus, firstly, it would be difficult to obtain a reliable statement of the child's ability by means of teacher-rating, as different teachers would be involved in different years, and secondly, if one looked at attainment in terms of school examinations, results might fluctuate over a three-year period, in which the children were examined annually. Regarding the use of teacher-rating as a limitation, perhaps an inevitable one, of the survey techniques of the nation-wide survey, the researcher decided not to use the method of teacher-rating as a guide to either ability or attainment. The small longitudinal study would give scope and time for a more analytical approach, and it was decided to use standardised tests to measure intelligence, vocabulary and reading comprehension, rather than use teacher-rating,

Hypotheses

In examining the number of books listed in relation to the three major factors of sex, social class and ability and attainment, on the basis of previous research findings, the following hypotheses were formulated.

It was hypothesised that

1. the mean number of books listed by the children over the three year period would decrease significantly,
2. on each occasion, at six-monthly intervals, the mean number of books listed by the girls would be greater than the mean number of books listed by the boys,
3. the number of non-reading pupils would increase over the three year period,
4. there would be a significant relationship between social class and the number of books listed by the children,
5. there would be a significant relationship between ability and attainment and the number of books listed by the children.

(3) To examine the influence of the school

The report aimed (1) to look closely at the influence of the school and (2) to study differences in the pattern of the reading habits and interests of children in different schools.

The School Council report had found that school type was "highly important" in influencing the amount of book reading at 12+ and 14+. The team commented that some of the differences, for instance, that grammar school children read more than comprehensive school children, did not seem surprising. However, there was one result which the ^{team} stated was "not one that we had expected, and it is not at all easy to interpret". This was that there were more non-readers in mixed schools than in single-sex schools. The report suggested possible explanations for these findings, but added that there might be other influencing factors which their analysis had failed to uncover. It was hoped to study this factor of school type in relation to mixed and single sex schools closely in the small sub-groups and compare the findings with those of the School Council. Although the sub-groups were very small (5 children in each of the single-sex schools) it was possible that some other influencing factors might be identified.

On the basis of the previous research, it was hypothesised that the mean number of books listed would be greater for the grammar school and for the single-sex schools, than the numbers for the mixed comprehensive schools.

- (4) To examine the amount of reading in relation to personality and attitude .

To attempt to examine the factors of personality and attitude was seen as one of the most important aims of the study. A large survey could give no indication of the strength of a habit, or of changes in habits.

Both these aspects, of strength and change, are related to personality and attitude, and it was thought it might be possible to examine these factors in a small-scale longitudinal study, by interviews over a period of three years, and also by other measures, if suitable ones could be found.

CHAPTER THREE

INITIAL STAGES OF THE INVESTIGATION

- (i) The Junior School used in the selection of the sample for the longitudinal study.

A junior school in the London Borough of Enfield was chosen for the pilot study. The school, built in 1911, was in an urban area, serving a catchment area of terraced and semi-detached houses, many of them converted into flats and maisonettes. At the time of the pilot survey the area had an increasing non-British population. Turkish and Greek Cypriots, Indians, Africans and West-Indians, constituted 40% of the children in the fourth year of their junior schooling.

Book provision in the school was good. Two wide corridors, one at each end of the school, housed all the school library books, fiction at one end of the school and non-fiction at the other. All books were grouped in categories in the non-fiction section. In the fiction section books were divided into four stages of difficulty, indicated by different colour coding.

There was a member of staff with a post of responsibility for the library. Each class had one session a week specifically to use the fiction library, and these sessions were always used by all members of staff. Children in the third and fourth years were allowed to change books at other times during the week and had easy access to the library area. In addition each classroom had a small class library, limited by lack of space, and each class had a box of annuals and comics to read in wet break times.

The school used the Ladybird Key Reading scheme in the first and second years, and the Wide Range Readers in the third and fourth years. Children withdrawn from their classes for extra help with reading in the third and fourth years used the Griffin Pirate readers. These children had reading ages of less than 9.0 on the Schonell Graded Word Recognition test, which was administered to all classes twice yearly.

A spare classroom in the main building was used as a remedial reading room, and extra material had been purchased, including a Language Master machine.

The school practised a system of team teaching. At that time (1975) in the fourth year there were four full-time teachers for 120 children. Although the children were in 3 groups of 40 for their registration groups, for many lessons and activities they worked in much smaller groups. A 'floating' teacher took remedial groups several times a week, and had individual sessions with children with special difficulties. In addition, for part of the year children with high reading ages (over 13 on Schonell) were withdrawn from their classes for one afternoon a week for a session on children's books, which included various activities including group work, taping, writing reviews, and discussions of books and authors.

(ii) The Pilot Study

In June 1975 a questionnaire was administered to the 120 children in their fourth year in the Junior School. (for a copy of the questionnaire see Appendix I). The results were examined for the year group of 120 children, then the results for the 40 children selected for the sample were extracted and compared with those of the year group.

Of the 120 children, 69% said that they regularly got books from a public library. 31% did not. 5% of the children were members of the Puffin Book Club. They had joined not through school, but through outside influences. 35% of the children said they did not read comics. Most of the other children listed several comics.

The most popular comics on the boys' list were Beano, Whoopee and Cor. On the girls' list the most popular comics were Jackie, Look-in and Jinty. The children were asked to name their favourite authors and favourite kinds of books and to say how they chose the books they read. The questionnaire findings are given in Appendix I and the favourite books and authors are mentioned at the beginning of Chapter 7, on Reading Interests.

All children listed names of books read in school. Only 7.5% of the children had read no books out of school (3 girls and 6 boys). 10% of the children (10 girls and 2 boys) had read more than 10 books out of school.

22.5% of the children (25 girls and 12 boys) had read more than 10 books in school. Both boys and girls reported books unfinished. About 10% of all the books listed by girls and 8% of the books listed by boys were left unfinished. The children had been asked to list all the books they had read in the last term (not the last month as in the Schools Council Survey). This was not difficult for them as most of them had a record in their desks, and could easily check the names of the books they had read in school. As many of them had bought books from home into school to read they had listed these also. This system of regular record-keeping of leisure time reading had been set up by the teachers, and for many children was an encouragement to read more books.

The 120 children listed a total of 1014 books read in school and 730 books read out of school in the Summer Term 1975. The mean number of books per child read in school was 8.4 books, and the mean number read out of school was 6 books. The Schools Council reported a mean number of 2.95 books read in a month out of school by this age group (10+). Thus the figure of 6 books per child read by the end of June in the Summer Term (approximately two months) in this survey in 1975 shows little difference from the figure for the national survey in 1971.

(iii) Choosing a sample from the year group

It was usual for at least half the children from this primary school to proceed to their 'linked' comprehensive school, which was the neighbourhood secondary school.

The rest of the children obtained places in other schools in the Borough, mainly for reasons of parental choice. One or two children might take entrance examinations to outside schools, like the City of London school, or apply for denominational schools, like the Jewish Free School.

It was decided to take one-third of the year group for the sample, as an appropriate number which could be handled in a programme of any intensity or duration. Even 40 was felt to be a large number for an investigation of this type.

An informal survey of the reading interests of this year group of 120

children had already been conducted in the Autumn of 1974. This served as a preliminary to the pilot study, which was carried out with the same year group in June 1975. The children completed a questionnaire which asked them to list the books they had read in the Summer Term 1975 (See Appendix I). Following this a sample of 40 children was selected for longitudinal study.

The researcher wished to study the factor of the influence of different schools, and it was necessary to make provision for this. The method of choosing the sample was random with certain constraints, to ensure representativeness and equal groups. Twenty children who were transferring to the 'link' school were matched with twenty children transferring to other schools. The method of 'matched pairs' was used, matching 20 pairs of children according to chronological age and reading age. Scores of the children on the Schonell Graded Word Recognition Test were available. The whole year group had been given the test, which was administered to every child by the same fourth year teacher in June 1975. The matches between children were made firstly on age, to the same or nearest month of birth, and secondly on reading age.

Throughout the report the 20 children transferring to the neighbourhood comprehensive school are referred to as the L Group. These are matched with 20 children transferring to 4 other schools, with 5 children in each school. These are referred to as the O Group throughout the report.

TABLE I Groups and Schools in the survey

Number of children

Group L	School 1	Mixed Comprehensive	20
Group O	School 2	Selective Grammar	5
	School 3	Girls' Comprehensive	5
	School 4	Mixed Comprehensive	5
	School 5	Boys' Comprehensive	5

5 children were transferring to School 2, and 5 children to School 3, so these were matched, in the first instance, with 10 children from

School 1, the neighbourhood link comprehensive. In Schools 4 and 5 there were more than 5 children transferring in each case, and the matches were made on the closeness of chronological age and reading age. The year group included 4 pairs of twins. There were two pairs of identical boy twins, one pair transferring to School 1, and one pair to School 5, and 2 pairs of non-identical Boy/girl twins, one pair transferring to School 4, and one pair separately to the two single-sex schools, 3 and 5. With this unusual circumstance of 4 pairs of twins in this year group of children, it was thought that there might be advantages in including all 4 pairs of twins in the sample. With common variables in family background, each pair of twins could be examined in relation to other factors to be examined for the whole sample, and as there were differences in sex and ability and attainment for some of the twins the pairs could be compared and contrasted.

Thus in the second stage, the twins were included in the sample. Then the remaining places were filled with the nearest matches on chronological age and reading age.

The matched pairs were very close when they were first chosen in July 1975. However, after the survey started, certain factors, beyond the control of the researcher, upset the matching. These were mainly concerned with children who left the district or transferred to other schools. In one instance, a boy from School 1 transferred to School 4 and another suitable match was found without difficulty. In other cases, where parents asked for late transfer, or left the district, the changes were more difficult to accommodate, and resulted in two pairs on the girls' list being considerably altered. This is the reason for the poor matches 2/12 and 3/13 (See Appendix 2).

Before proceeding with the investigation in the secondary schools, permission was obtained from the Chief Education Office of the London Borough of Enfield, from the head teachers of the schools concerned, and from the parents of the children selected for the survey.

After this permission was granted, each child was interviewed. The purpose of the survey was explained to the children and information collected on family background, interests and hobbies.

- (iv) Comparison of the sample of 40 children with the year group of 120 children.

The mean chronological ages and reading ages were as follows:

TABLE 2

Mean Chronological Ages of the Year Group and the Sample Group

	Girls	Boys
Year Group (n = 120)	11 years 3 months	11 years 4 months
Sample Group (n = 40)	11 years 2 months	11 years 4½ months

TABLE 3

Mean Reading Ages on the Schonell Word Recognition Test

	Girls	Boys
Year Group (n = 120)	12.4	11.4
Sample Group (n = 40)	12.5	12.7

One noticeable difference in the tables is in the mean reading age of the boys in the sample compared with the overall figure for the year group. This is due to the fact that very few children who transferred to schools other than the link school had low reading ages. Only five of the children in the sample scored below 11.0 on the Schonell test. Thus, the decision to use 4 sub-groups from different neighbourhood schools, to try to cover the range of secondary schooling, meant that there was less likelihood of children in the year group with low reading ages (below 9.0) being included in the sample. As there were 12 boys outside the sample with low reading ages this accounted for the difference in the means.

In extracting the questionnaire findings for the sample (n = 40) and comparing them with the findings for the whole year group (n = 120) the differences between the amount of reading done by girls and boys were noted. The girls in the sample were listing almost half the total for the girls in the year group (522 titles out of 1064). The boys in the sample were listing just over a third of the books for the boys (238 titles out of 680).

TABLE 4

Total number of books listed in school and out of school by girls and boys

	Girls			Boys		
	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Year Group (n = 120)	584	480	1064	430	250	680
Sample (n = 40)	269	253	522	143	95	238

An examination of the mean scores (Table 5) of the number of books listed in school and out of school show higher mean scores for the children in the sample (n = 40) than for the children in the whole year group (n = 120).

TABLE 5

Comparison of the mean scores of the number of books listed in school and out of school.

	In School	Out of School
Year group (n = 120)	8.4	6.0
Sample group (n = 40)	10.3	8.2
Sample girls (n = 20)	13.35	12.1
Sample boys (n = 20)	7.15	4.25

The children in the sample had listed 760 books altogether in June 1975. Of these 348 were read out of school, 253 by the girls and 95 by the boys (see Table 3.IV), the mean score of the sample being 8.2 books per children, compared with the mean score of 6 books for the whole year group.

Thus it must be noted that in the term preceeding the survey the girls chosen for the sample were listing more books than the boys, and that the

mean score for both boys and girls in the sample ($n = 40$) was greater than the mean score for all the boys and girls in the year group ($n = 120$).

In a comparison of favourite authors there were few differences between the sample and the year group. A detailed comparison will be found in Chapter 7. The favourite author was Enid Blyton with Michael Bond in second place on both lists.

(v) Differences between the two groups in the Sample

The method of choosing the sample meant that from the beginning of the survey there were differences between the group of children attending the link comprehensive school (L group) and the children attending other schools (O group).

The following factors may be noted.

1. Parental choice

The subjects in the O Group (other schools) were all children whose parents had, for various reasons, chosen to send them to schools other than the neighbourhood link comprehensive schools.

2. Age

The two groups were closely matched in chronological age.

TABLE 6

Mean Chronological ages of the 2 groups in the sample.

	Girls	Boys
Sample Group L ($n = 20$)	11 years 3 months	11 years 5 months
Sample Group O ($n = 20$)	11 years 1 month	11 years 4 months

3. Reading Age

The two groups did not differ in reading ability, measured on Schonell Word Recognition Test, at the beginning of the survey in 1975.

TABLE 7

Mean Reading Ages of the 2 groups in the sample

	Girls	Boys
Sample L Group (n = 20)	12.5	12.9
Sample O Group (n = 20)	12.5	12.5

On the Schonell Test 65% of children in both the O and L Groups scored 12 or over, and 35% of the children in each group scored under 12.

4. Social Class

The two groups differed in composition as regards social class, in that there were different numbers of children in each socio-economic group, as defined by the Registrar General's classification. Group O had 12 children with fathers in non-manual occupations and 8 children with fathers in manual occupations. Group L had 15 children with fathers in non-manual occupations and 15 children with fathers in manual occupations. There were no children with fathers in unskilled occupations.

TABLE 8

Percentage of children in socio-economic groups divided into non-manual and manual occupations.

	O Group	L Group
Non-manual occupations	60%	25%
Manual occupations	40%	75%

5. Amount read

The numbers of books listed by girls and boys in the O Group in June 1975 were greater than the numbers listed by girls and boys in the L Group. A comparison of the mean scores for each group shows the greater difference for the girls.

TABLE 9

Comparison of the Mean Scores of the number of books listed in school
in the Summer Term 1975 in the 4 sub-groups of girls and boys.

	In School	Out of School
<u>Sub-Groups</u>		
Girls O (n = 10)	16.0	15.9
Girls L (n = 10)	10.7	8.3
Boys O (n = 10)	7.3	4.9
Boys L (n = 10)	7.0	3.6

For books read out of school, the mean score of the girls in Group O was almost twice as many as the girls in Group L. The mean scores for the boys in Group O, and the boys in Group L were much closer.

Thus it was noted that the girls chosen for the sample were listing more books than the boys, and that the children proceeding to the link school (Group L) were listing less books than the children proceeding to other schools (Group O) with the differences between the groups being less marked for the boys than for the girls.

It was evident that the large numbers of books listed by some of the girls were contributing to the high mean scores. For example, in the O Group, three girls listed 32, 40 books and 31 books, and in the L Group, 2 girls listed 21 and 18 books. None of the boys listed such large numbers. The girls who read a lot continued to list large numbers of books, and the high mean scores for the girls occurred throughout the survey.

Thus, it is clear there were differences between the 2 groups in the sample, and also between the sample and the whole of the year group. The mean scores for the sample's listings were higher than those of the year group.

The sample contained no children with the lowest reading ages, and also had no children with fathers in unskilled manual occupations.

At the end of the survey in June 1978 the researcher was able to trace 57 of the other 80 children in the original year group, and these 57 children completed the same questionnaire as the 40 children in the sample. It was found that the mean score for the sample were still higher than those for the other children. On that occasion the mean score for the sample was 3.425 books and for the 57 children it was 1.965 books. The Schools Council had reported a mean of 1.95 books for the 14+ age group in their survey. This was a further indication that the particular composition of the sample would make it impossible to generalise any findings to the whole of the child population.

CHAPTER FOUR

MEASURES AND APPROACHES USED IN THE SURVEY

Two approaches, a survey approach and a case study approach, were used. It was hoped that the two approaches would complement each other and provide an overall view of the reading habits of the children as well as detailed information on the interests of individual children.

Nisbet and Watt (1978) comment on this method of research and agree that the two approaches can be used to complement each other, suggesting that "together they represent the macro and micro approaches".

A large-scale survey can be followed up by case studies to test out conclusions.

In this instance the survey is relatively small (only 40 children) and the case studies are used alongside the survey technique rather than as a follow-up to them.

Both survey and case study approaches have their strengths and weaknesses. Nisbet and Watt (1978) point out that a case study, in looking at a single instance, can identify unique features of interaction within that instance; that results are more easily understood by a wide readership and "have a three-dimensional reality, like a good documentary", and that the case study also provides suggestions for intelligent interpretations of other similar cases.

While it is a style of inquiry suited to the individual researcher, the case study approach has its weaknesses. Nisbet and Watt suggest that these lie in the fact that results are not easily generalisable, and that the inevitable selectivity of the researcher can be personal and subjective.

In contrast to the case study approach the systematic techniques of the survey approach identify elements which are common to the number of persons or observations. It does lead to generalisable findings.

"It has two serious weaknesses. First it may obliterate the unique features and patterns within small groups, or even within an institution or an individual.... which may hold the key to the puzzle. Second, the researcher finds only what he seeks; if something is not covered in the survey instruments, it will be missed unless the respondent particularly wishes to supply extra information."

(Nisbet and Watt 1978)

By using both approaches the researcher hoped to draw on the strengths of both, and reduce the effect of the weaknesses of each.

The Survey Approach.

As part of the survey approach, the researcher used a questionnaire and standardised tests.

The Questionnaire.

The questionnaire was designed by the researcher for use in each year of the survey. The questionnaire (see Appendix 3) has 21 questions. The first seven questions are the same as those used on the Schools Council survey in 1971. The first question asks the children to list comics and magazines they read regularly. Questions 3 to 7 are concerned with the titles of books read in the last month. The other questions are all concerned with factors which may be associated with reading, and may change over a period of time, including the amount of television viewing, newspaper reading, membership of a library, number of books owned, number of interests and liking for English lessons.

Standardised tests

The children were given standardised tests at different stages of the survey. Results of the Widespan Reading Tests, the NFER Verbal Test EF and the APU Vocabulary Test are given in the relevant sections of Chapter 5.

SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) was used to analyse the findings of the questionnaire and the standardised tests, using a computer.

The Case Study Approach

Each child was interviewed seven times in all, once in June 1975, at the beginning of the survey, and twice yearly thereafter for the next three years (1976-1979) in February and June.

The Interviews

At the first interviews in February, 1976, replies were stilted and hesitant in many cases, and the children appeared ill at ease. It was thought that the children were uneasy because the researcher made notes and also used the tape recorder. After the first occasion the researcher decided to use sometimes one method and sometimes the other, and found that either was successful and that tension was reduced. Also, on the first occasion the researcher tried to keep to a set list of questions to ask each subject. This too was not successful. As Nisbet and Watt point out, the carefully constructed interview schedules followed in large surveys are not suitable for the case study approach.

"The case study interview is much more loosely structured. It has to allow each person to respond in his own unique way. Consequently, you let the respondent set the pace and choose the direction of the interview". (Nisbet and Watt 1978)

It was found that a loosely structured interview was suitable, and as the three years of the survey progressed the children responded to this method. Finally, the researcher found that she was providing minimal stimulus, and that for most subjects the interviewee set the course of the interview, within a loosely structured framework, which was flexible, and allowed ample time for discussion of issues raised by the child.

As part of the case study approach the researcher wanted to find out something about the child's attitude towards reading, and was interested in exploring the possibility of using measures of personality or attitude if suitable ones could be found.

The Eysenck Junior Personality Inventory.

It was decided to use the E.J.P.I. with the children in the survey in 1977.

A description of the inventory and its use with this group of children will be found in the relevant section of Chapter 7.

Attitude Measurement

No suitable measure of attitude towards reading was found to use with children of this age group, so the researcher designed an attitude scale, which was piloted in Spring 1977, and used with the children in the survey in June 1977. The construction of the scale, with its use and findings, is described in detail in Chapter 7.

Summary

The researcher attempted, by the survey approach, to obtain a view of the reading habits and interests of this group of 40 children over a three year period. This gave a wider macro-view of the child in the school situation, with information about his ability and attainment on standardised tests, and the amount of his voluntary reading compared with others in the peer group. At the same time, the researcher attempted by a case study approach, to obtain a micro-view of the child as an individual with his own interests, habits and attitudes.

Note: Throughout this report all references to the children are by the identification numbers, 1 to 40, given to the children in all analysis of questionnaires and tests. The same numbers are used for the case studies. In this way the reader may identify any particular child when consulting any lists and tables in the report, or referring to the Case Studies. The names used in the Case Studies are fictitious.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE EXTENT OF THE VOLUNTARY READING OF THE CHILDREN IN THE SAMPLE

At the end of the survey the voluntary book reading of the children, as indicated by the numbers of books listed, was examined in relation to the three factors of sex, social class and ability and attainment.

Different types of readers were considered in the 4 categories used by the Schools Council, of non-readers, light readers, moderate readers and heavy readers. The researcher met the children each February and June for the 3 years of the survey, six occasions in all.

The voluntary reading of the children in the sample in relation to sex.

TABLE 10

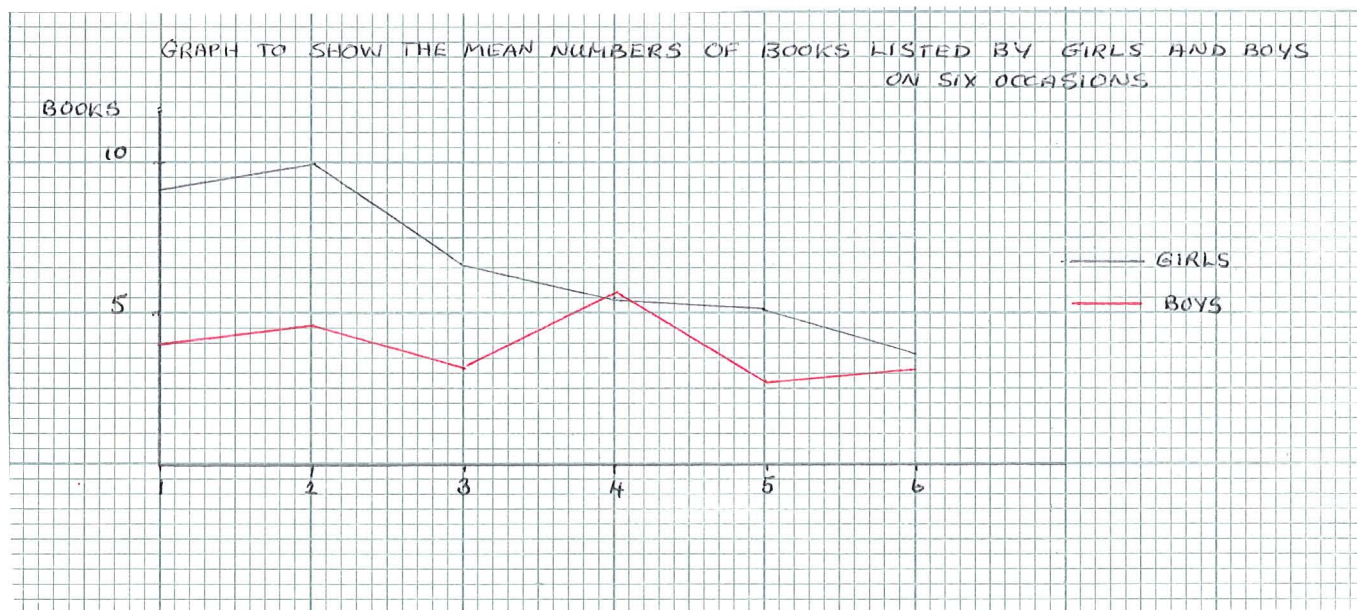
Mean scores for the books listed on 6 occasions

Occasion	1	2	3	4	5	6
Girls	9.2	10.0	6.6	5.5	5.2	3.65
Boys	3.9	4.6	3.3	5.7	2.7	3.2
Total	6.55	7.3	4.95	5.6	3.95	3.425

As seen in table 10, the mean number of books listed appears to decrease in each successive year of the survey, the lowest being recorded on the last occasion in June 1978. This supports the hypothesis that the mean score of the number of books listed would decrease over the three year period.

The second hypothesis that the girls would list more books than the boys is supported by the fact that the mean score for the girls was greater than that for the boys on 5 out of 6 occasions. As the table shows, the decrease in the mean scores for the girls was greater than the decrease for the boys. By the last occasion of the survey, June 1978, the difference between the mean scores for the girls and boys had reduced to 0.45 books.

An overall view shows a gradual decline in the amount of the girls reading, with a steady decrease from year to year. For the boys the pattern fluctuates and there is a less perceptible decrease in the mean number of books listed. Thus it appears that the difference in the amount read by girls and boys was more marked at the beginning of the survey than at the end.



It had been hypothesised that the decrease would be significant and it had been intended to use Analysis of Variance, as the most suitable way of measuring this. When an Analysis of Variance was carried out the results showed that the decrease was significant at the 0.0001 level and that the difference between the mean scores for girls and boys was significant, at the 0.0005 level. However, some doubt arose as to whether ANOVA was, after all a suitable measure to use. This was due to the high scores of some individuals. These are given in detail in Tables 11 and 12 to direct the reader's attention to the fact that in dealing with a small sample of children, the presence of a few children with outlying scores, well above those of the rest of the group, may have the effect of raising the mean scores of a group to a degree where it may not be a realistic reflection of the scores of the majority of the children. For instance, on the first occasion one girl listed 46 books and one girl 41 books. The scores of these avid readers substantially influence the mean scores for the girls, and must also influence the ANOVA results.

TABLE 11Number of books listed by the Girls (n = 20)

<u>Id.</u> <u>Number</u>	<u>1976</u>		<u>1977</u>		<u>1978</u>	
	<u>Feb.</u>	<u>June</u>	<u>Feb.</u>	<u>June</u>	<u>Feb.</u>	<u>June</u>
001	46	33	31	31	28	13
002	11	12	4	3	2	2
003	41	24	24	11	13	6
004	4	6	3	2	3	4
005	4	3	2	2	2	1
006	4	5	3	3	0	0
007	12	24	11	4	15	8
008	6	11	1	4	5	7
009	4	13	7	4	6	3
010	17	22	24	12	17	17
011	3	2	2	4	1	0
012	1	3	1	3	0	0
013	2	3	1	1	0	1
014	2	4	4	2	0	0
015	4	11	4	9	4	4
016	7	8	0	4	2	3
017	4	5	4	6	2	2
018	3	3	2	2	1	0
019	4	5	4	2	3	2
020	5	3	0	1	0	0

TABLE 12

Number of books listed by the Boys (n = 20)

<u>Id.</u> <u>Number</u>	<u>1976</u>		<u>1977</u>		<u>1978</u>	
	<u>Feb.</u>	<u>June</u>	<u>Feb.</u>	<u>June</u>	<u>Feb.</u>	<u>June</u>
021	13	6	5	3	3	4
022	7	4	1	1	0	0
023	0	5	0	3	2	0
024	4	6	6	2	3	1
025	1	2	2	2	1	1
026	10	12	9	12	12	15
027	1	6	10	15	0	5
028	0	0	5	13	0	1
029	5	6	9	5	1	4
030	7	7	4	15	6	4
031	2	5	1	5	5	8
032	5	7	2	7	8	9
033	0	1	0	1	0	1
034	0	2	0	2	0	2
035	1	6	2	7	3	1
036	6	5	3	3	2	3
037	2	3	0	4	0	1
038	7	3	3	8	4	2
039	4	3	2	4	1	1
040	3	3	2	2	2	1

Thus, it can be argued that the use of ANOVA is inappropriate for the analysis of this data. Assumptions of ANOVA are, firstly that variances between sub-groups are homogeneous, and, secondly, that the data from which the sub-groups are drawn, is normally distributed. W.J. Popham (1967) believes that, if departures from the two conditions specified are not drastic, analysis of variance may be employed without fear of spurious interpretation. He states,

"there is increasing evidence attesting to the 'robustness' of analysis of variance models, that is, their ability to withstand fairly serious departures from the above assumptions without disturbing the meaning of the final statistical analysis." (Popham 1967)

It remains questionable whether the scores of certain individuals in the sample constitute a departure from the norm so drastic that the results of the ANOVA model for the two sub-groups of girls and boys should be discounted. One view would be that the ANOVA model is 'robust' enough to use in this instance. Another view would suggest that its use is inappropriate with the data available, because there is not normal distribution, due to high scores of the avid readers.

Thus the use of ANOVA established that the decrease in the number of books listed, and the difference in the mean scores for girls and boys, appeared to be significant when measured in this way. At the same time its use gave rise to doubts whether the exercise of looking at the mean scores was the best way of examining this data. The mean is the most frequently used measure of central tendency. Mean scores are normally quoted in research findings, such as those mentioned earlier in this report (Taylor 1940, Whitehead 1977). However, it might in some cases be more appropriate to quote the median scores. Whereas the mean of a group is definitely affected by extreme scores, the median is not. L.R. Gay states,

"in certain cases, the median may actually give a more accurate estimate of the typical score." (Gay 1976)

TABLES SHOWING THE MEAN, THE MEDIAN, and the MAXIMUM and MINIMUM
NUMBERS OF BOOKS LISTED.

TABLE 13. Scores for the 40 children in the sample

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Mean	6.55	7.3	4.95	5.6	3.95	3.425
Median	4	5	2.75	3.5	2	1.75
Maximum books listed	46	33	31	31	28	17
Minimum books listed	0	0	0	1	0	0

TABLE 14. Scores for the 20 girls

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Mean	9.2	10.0	6.6	5.5	5.2	3.65
Median	4.2	5.5	3.5	2.25	2.17	3.5
Maximum books listed	46	33	31	31	28	17
Minimum books listed	1	2	0	1	0	0

TABLE 15. Scores for the 20 boys

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Mean	3.9	4.6	3.3	5.7	2.7	3.2
Median	3.5	4.8	2.3	4.0	1.8	1.5
Maximum books listed	13	12	10	15	12	15
Minimum books listed	0	0	0	1	0	0

In the three most frequently used measures of central tendency (the mode, the median and the mean) the mean is the most appropriate for interval or ratio data, and the median for ordinal data. However, Gay suggests that "for certain distributions, the median may be selected as the most appropriate measure of central tendency even though the data represent an interval or ratio scale." (Gay, 1976).

Tables 13, 14 and 15 give the median and mean scores for the sample, and the maximum and minimum numbers of books listed. For some occasions of the survey the median scores may reflect a more accurate view of the typical score for a group, especially for the girls. The variation in scores is most notable in the first year of the survey. On occasions 1 and 2 the mean and median figures for the boys are close, but for the girls the median is approximately half the mean, showing that there was not normal distribution. For the girls it is only at the end of the survey that the mean and the median reach a close approximation. The comparison of the mean and median figures reinforces the suggestion that the mean may not be the most appropriate measure to use in some situations.

Types of readers.

The Schools Council survey (Whitehead, 1977) had examined types of readers in 4 categories of non-readers, light readers (listing 1 to 2 books), moderate readers (listing 3 to 4 books) and heavy readers (listing 5 books or more).

It was decided to look at the children by the same categories as a general guide to types of readers in the sample.

TABLE 16. Percentages of children in the 4 categories.

Occasion	1	2	3	4	5	6
Non-readers	10%	2.5%	15%	0%	25%	20%
Light (1-2)	20%	10%	32.5%	32.5%	32.5%	37.5%
Moderate (3.4)	30%	27.5%	25%	32.5%	17.5%	20%
Heavy (5 & over)	40%	60%	27.5%	35%	25%	22.5%

The hypothesis that there would be an increase in the number of children listing no books over the three year period, is supported by the figure in Table 16, although the numbers are too small to be of significance.

In the last year of the survey 10 children (25%) listed no books in February and 8 children (20%) listed no books in June 1978. There was also a rise in the number of light readers after the first year. At the end of the survey 15 children (37.5%) were light readers. Between 25% and 32.5% of the children were moderate readers in the first two years, with a fall in the number of moderate readers in the last year, 1978. The number of heavy readers also decreased in each successive year of the survey. 40% of the children listed books in the "heavy" category in February 1976 and 60% in June. By June 1978 the percentage of heavy readers had decreased to 22.5%.

TABLE 17. Percentage of girls and boys in 4 categories.

Occasion	1		2		3		4		5		6	
Sex	Girl.Boy		Girl.Boy		Girl.Boy		Girl.Boy		Girl.Boy		Girl. Boy.	
Non-readers	0	20	0	5	10	20	0	0	25	25	30	10
Light (1-2)	15	25	5	15	30	35	35	30	30	35	25	50
Moderate (3-4)	45	15	30	25	35	15	40	25	15	20	20	20
Heavy 5+	40	40	65	55	25	30	25	45	30	20	25	30

The division of the sample by sex showed one unanticipated result. The nation-wide Schools Council Survey (Whitehead, 1977) had reported more non-book readers among boys (40%) than girls (32%) at the age of 14+, and the researcher had expected there would be more boys than girls listing no books in 1978. At the end of the survey however, there were more girls than boys listing no books. Once again the percentages refer to

numbers too small to be of significance. In 1976 4 boys listed no books in February and 1 boy in June. In 1977, 6 children (2 girls and 4 boys) listed no books in February and there were no non-book-readers in June. These figures increased in 1978 with 10 children (5 girls and 5 boys) listing no books in February. In June 1978 of the 8 children who listed no books 6 were girls.

There was a large number of heavy book readers at the beginning of the survey. In February 1976, 8 girls and 8 boys were listing books in the heavy reader category. The percentages were even higher in June 1976, with 13 girls and 11 boys listing books in this category. The numbers decreased in the second and third years, at the end of the survey only 5 girls and 4 boys listing books in the heavy category.

Overall it will be seen that there is an increase in the number of non-book-readers and light readers, and a decrease in the numbers of moderate and heavy readers.

The child who reads a lot remains a problem. The Schools Council Report (Whitehead, 1977) does not give the maximum number of books listed by children in different schools. Possibly the child who is a avid reader should be in a further category of "very heavy readers". In a survey dealing with over a thousand girls and boys in each age group, perhaps a proportion of avid readers might not seriously effect the mean scores of the group. However, the reader is given only the type of book reader as a percentage of each year group, without information about the maximum number of books read in each group. Among 8,000 children there must have been some who listed a lot more than 5 books. It might have been interesting to note the numbers of children in a category of very heavy readers listing, say 10 books or more. In this small survey, out of 40 children, 12 children listed 10 books or more on one or more occasion during the survey, and two children (both girls) listed more than 10 books on every occasion.

It was thought that the categorising of the children into 4 types of book readers was useful as a general guide in a large scale survey, but that as soon as one looks at individuals from a case study approach it is realised that very few children can be easily categorised as one type or another. Different kinds of readers in this sample are described in Chapter 9 with selected case studies as illustrations.

(ii) The voluntary reading of the children in the sample in relation to social class.

The children were divided into socio-economic groups according to the Registrar General's classification, in which the social classes are; I. professional, II. managerial and technical, III. skilled non-manual, and manual, IV. semi-skilled and V. unskilled. None of the children in the sample had fathers in unskilled occupation(V), and this is another factor which makes it inappropriate to generalise from the findings of this small survey.

The Schools Council survey had classified the children into two groups, of those with fathers in non-manual occupations and those with fathers in manual occupations, and found that the children in the first group listed more books than the children in the second group.

This small-scale survey produced the same finding. Children with fathers in non-manual occupations listed more books than children with fathers in manual occupations. The correlation between the numbers of books listed and social class was significant at a level of 0.01 for all 6 occasions of the survey.

The percentage of children in each group, and the actual numbers of children in each group by sex and school, are given in Tables 18 and 19.

TABLE 18. PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN IN EACH CLASSIFICATION.

1	17.5%)		
2	15%)	Total Non-Manual	42.5%
3 (1)	10%)		
3 (11)	42.5%)		
4	15%)	Total Manual	57.5%

TABLE 19. SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUP BY SEX AND SCHOOL

School	Non-manual		Manual	
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
1 (Link)	2	3	8	7
2 (Grammar)	3	2	0	0
3 (Girls')	2	0	3	0
4 (Mixed)	0	1	2	2
5 (Boys)	0	4	0	1
TOTAL	7	10	13	10

(iii) The voluntary reading of the children in the sample in relation to Ability and Attainment.

At the outset of the study the only available information on test scores of any kind was the scores of the children on the Schonell Word Recognition Test. This test was administered to all the children in the year group in the Summer of 1975 before they left the primary school. In each case the test was given by the same fourth year teacher.

A comparison of the mean reading ages of the children in the sample with those of the year group is given in the relevant section of Chapter 2, page 23. There it was noted that the mean reading ages of the children in the sample were, for all groups, approximately a year higher than the mean chronological age of the children (Table 3). This particular composition of the sample makes it impossible to generalise findings to the whole of the population.

The lowest score in the sample was 8 . 9 and only 6 children scored below 10.0.

TABLE 20. DISTRIBUTION OF SCORES ON THE SCHONELL TEST 1975

Score on the test	No. of girls	No. of boys	Total number of children
14.0 and over	5	7	12
13 - 13.9	5	5	10
12 - 12.9	2	2	4
11 - 11.9	3	2	5
10 - 10.9	3	0	3
below 10	2	4	6

Differences in mean scores and maximum and minimum scores between groups was minimal.

TABLE 21. MEAN SCORES ON THE SCHONELL TEST BY SEX AND SCHOOL.

	Mean	S.D.	Minimum	Maximum
Overall sample (40)	12.6	1.7	8.9	14.8
Group O Girls (10)	12.5	1.6	9.5	14.8
Group L Girls (10)	12.57	1.7	9.9	14.6
Group O Boys (10)	12.5	2.0	9.0	14.8
Group L Boys (10)	12.9	2.0	8.9	14.7

Correlations of the test scores on the Schonell Word Recognition Test and the number of books listed by the children in June 1975 were not significant either for the sample (n= 40) or for any of the sub-groups of 10 within the sample.

As already mentioned, as the children in the sample were distributed in five different secondary schools, the researcher had decided to use standardised measures of ability and attainment, to obtain a view of the general ability of the children in the sample, and to look at the relationship between ability and the number of books listed. On two of the tests used, the Widespan Reading Test, and the NFER Verbal Test EF, the correlations between comprehension and the number of books listed, and between verbal ability and the number of books listed, were significant, in each case at a 0.05 level of significance. For the third test used, which was a vocabulary test (APU) the correlation between the scores and the number of books listed were not significant. The researcher also gave the children a test of Non-Verbal Intelligence, the NFER Non-Verbal Test DH. The purpose of giving this test was to have some alternative measure of intelligence for the children with low scores on all the tests requiring verbal ability. All the children were given the non-verbal test and the results correlated with the scores on the verbal test to a significance level of .001. The scores on the non-verbal test are mentioned only in the case studies where there is a notable discrepancy between the score on the non-verbal test and all other measures requiring verbal ability.

The Widespan Reading Test

The first test used was the Widespan Reading Test. This was administered in the first year of the survey, and again in the third year (1976 and 1978).

The Widespan tests are measures of the level of reading comprehension. The manual states, "As measures of reading comprehension, they assess the child's skills in decoding printed symbols into meaningful sounds of language, in fitting meanings to groups of sounds, and in construing the structural relationship of meaning in their total semantic and syntactical context."

The measures of comprehension to which the tests lead are standardised

scores which permit a child's performance to be compared with those of other children of the same age. The tests were standardised on a sample of children in schools to represent the national distribution of schools of various types. The sample ranged from 1st year junior to 4th year secondary school, through eight years. The tests ask the child to supply a word to complete a sentence. The word is chosen from another sentence to the left of the incomplete sentence. The test items increase in difficulty throughout the test, and there are different beginning points depending on the age of the children. Thus, in their first year of secondary school the children began at item 24 of the test and in year three at item 46 of the test. There are 80 items altogether, The manual provides detailed conversion tables for calculating equivalents for the standardised scores.

The researcher gave the test to all the children and found no difficulties in administering it. The children found the instructions easy to follow, and appeared to like the form of the test.

The correlations^{*} between the scores on the Widespan tests and the numbers of books listed were significant at the 0.05 level, both in 1976 and in 1978. Thus the correlation between the amount read and a measure of comprehension of continuous prose was significant, whereas in 1975 the correlation between the amount read and word recognition was not significant, when the children were given the Schonell test which measures word recognition on an isolated word list.

The results on the Widespan tests indicted a range of ability with scores from 76 to 128 in February 1976, and from 72 to 125 in February 1978.

TABLE 22 MEAN SCORES ON THE WIDESPAN TESTS IN 1976 and 1978

	<u>1976</u>	<u>1978</u>
Sample (n = 40)	105.2	104.7
Girls (n = 20)	104.75	104.45
Girls O (n = 10)	106.1	106.5
Girls L (n = 10)	103.4	102.4
Boys (n = 20)	105.7	105.0
Boys O (n = 10)	105.2	105.4
Boys L (n = 10)	106.2	104.6

* $r=0.31; n=40; p<0.05$. 1976 $r=0.27; n=40; p<0.05$. 1978

The boys scored slightly higher than the girls overall.. The group with the lowest mean score (GIRLS L) also had the lowest mean scores for the number of books listed for the last three occasions of the survey (i.e. June 1977 and February and June 1978).

THE N.F.E.R. VERBAL TEST EF

This Verbal Test was chosen as it was constructed to provide a measure of general scholastic ability in the first two years of the secondary school. The manual states that the scores on the test may be used "to give a general indication of the level of ability of a particular child or class".

The test was standardised after use with a representative sample of children aged between 11.3 and 13.2 in a selected area, the data being used to construct the conversion tables which accompany the test.

The manual states that the scores "are similar to Intelligence Quotients in their numerical distribution, but they differ in that they are not arrived at through consideration of mental age. Each child is assessed by comparing him with a representative sample of children of exactly the same age". The test consists of 90 items and takes 40 minutes to complete. The test was given to the children in the sample in this survey in June/July 1977, in their second year in secondary school. Standardised scores ranged from 83 to 138. The mean score was 105.5 for the whole sample.

The correlation* of scores on the Verbal Test with the number of books listed by the children in June 1977 was significant at the 0.05 level.

There were differences in the mean scores of the boys and girls and also differences between the school groups. The mean scores for the boys was higher than that for the girls. The group of children with the highest mean score (111.5) was the O group of boys (other schools) and the group with the lowest mean score (97) on the Verbal Test was the L group of girls (link school). It may be noted that this Group (Girls L) was the group which listed the smallest number of books on the occasion the test was administered (June 1977).

* $r=0.31$; $n=40$; $p<0.05$

TABLE 23 THE MEAN SCORES OF GIRLS AND BOYS ON THE VERBAL TEST EF

	Total Group n = 20	O Group n = 10	L Group n = 10
Girls	102.4	107.9	97
Boys	108.7	111.5	106

The APU Vocabulary Test

The APU Vocabulary Test, states the manual, "was designed as a general purpose measure of vocabulary for use in a wide range of applications where an overall indication of understanding of words is required, rather than a precise diagnosis of verbal fluency".

It was originally developed as part of the APU Occupational Interests Guide (Closs 1975) research project. It was for use with the 13 to 18 year age range and it was expected it would be used mainly with school leavers. The manual explains that as the majority of subjects would be around average ability the test was constructed so that the scores in the average range are spread over a wider span of the scale than is usual. Users of the scale are advised that it is not very suitable for use with the less able or those of high ability.

It is a multiple choice test, with 75 items and has a 15 minute time limit. A table gives percentile equivalents of raw scores. Norms are given for ages 11 to 17 years and are derived from a standardisation sample of over 6,000 children.

The APU Vocabulary Test was used with the children in the survey in June 1977 and they were 12-13 years, in their second year in secondary school. The children did not enjoy the test. Several of them said they found it difficult. From observation, it seemed that some of the children, especially the less able, either gave up before the end of the test or guessed the answers.

Scores of the 40 children ranged from 9 to 97, 24 children obtained percentiles of over 50.

Correlation of scores on the test with the number of books listed by the children were not significant, indicating that vocabulary was not related to the number of books listed by the children.

THE WIDESPAN TEST and the NFER VERBAL TEST

For the two tests where the numbers of books listed correlated significantly with the test scores (Widespan Test and NFER Verbal Test) the researcher examined the results more closely. On the Widespan Reading Test, 11 children scored less than 100 and 29 children scored 100 or over. On the NFER Verbal Test, 19 children scored under 100 and 21 children scored 100 or over. In the 4 categories of types of readers, there were more non-readers among children who scored under 100 on the Verbal Test, and more heavy readers among children who scored 100 and over.

TABLE 24. NUMBER OF READERS SCORING UNDER 100 AND OVER 100 ON THE VERBAL TEST EF IN 4 CATEGORIES OF READERS

	1976		1977		1978	
	Feb.	June	Feb.	June.	Feb.	June
Non. under 100	3	1	5	0	6	6
100+	1	0	1	0	4	2
Light. Under 100	4	3	5	6	7	7
100+	4	1	8	7	6	8
Moderate						
Under 100	7	6	5	7	4	5
100+	5	5	5	6	3	3
Heavy Under 100	5	9	4	6	2	1
100+	11	15	7	8	8	8

However, on the Widespan Reading Test, while there were more heavy readers, among the children with scores of over 100, many of the non-readers scored over 100 on this test.

TABLE 25. NUMBER OF READERS SCORING UNDER 100 AND OVER 100
ON THE WIDESPAN TEST

		1976		1977		1978	
		Feb.	June	Feb.	June	Feb.	June
Non	Under 100	0	0	1	0	2	3
	100+	4	1	5	0	8	5
Light	Under 100	3	1	5	6	5	4
	100+	5	3	8	6	8	11
Moderate	Under 100	6	5	3	2	3	4
	100+	6	6	7	11	4	4
Heavy	Under 100	2	5	2	3	1	0
	100+	14	19	9	11	9	9

Summary

In an examination of the voluntary reading of the children in the sample in relation to the influences of sex, social class and ability and attainment, the findings in this Chapter may be summarised briefly.

1. For the whole sample there was a significant decrease in the number of books listed over three years of the survey.
2. The girls listed more books than the boys on 5 out of 6 occasions.
3. For the girls the decline in the number of books listed was more marked than for the boys and there was a gradual decrease from year to year in the mean score.
4. For the boys the decrease was small, and there was not a gradual decline. Instead the pattern fluctuated with slightly higher mean scores in June than in February of each year.

5. The girls who were heavy readers listed more books than the boys who were heavy readers. A few girls listed such large numbers of books that their scores had the effect of raising the mean score for the girls to such a degree that the median may be a more accurate view of the typical scores for the girls.
6. More girls than boys became non-book-readers in the course of the survey.
7. The number of non-book readers and light readers increased and moderate and heavy readers decreased over the three year period.
8. There was a significant correlation between social class and the number of books listed on each occasion of the survey.
9. There was a significant correlation between the number of books listed and the scores on the Widespan Reading Test and the NFER Verbal Test, but not on the Schonell Word Recognition Test or the APU Vocabulary Test.
10. There were more heavy readers among the children scoring over 100 on these two standardised tests.
11. The group of children with the lowest mean scores on these two standardised tests was the group of girls in the Link School. This was also the group with the lowest mean score for the number of books listed on the last three occasions of the survey.

CHAPTER SIX

THE INFLUENCE OF THE SCHOOL

It may be suggested that there are general school factors which may influence the amount of a child's voluntary reading.

1. The first important factor is book provision, both in central and class libraries. Organisation and management of this provision varies considerably and is dependent on many variables such as the size of the school, the number of pupils, the space available for libraries, and an adequate allowance for the purchase of books. Whatever the physical conditions may be, the crucial issues seem to be to provide as wide a range of books as possible, both fiction and non-fiction, and then to make them accessible, and available to the children.
2. The second factor is the human one. In a school where there is encouragement from an interested adult or adults, whether class teachers, librarians, English teachers, year heads or the Head teacher, the amount of children's reading, and their interest in reading, is likely to be influenced by these adults.
3. A third influencing factor may be the teacher's choice of books to read in English lessons. Many children may be motivated to look for books to read for themselves, after enjoying a book in an English lesson. This question is discussed in more detail in Chapter Eight on Children's Reading Interests, and is also mentioned in several of the case studies in Chapter Nine.
4. Another factor which may influence the amount of the children's reading, in some secondary schools is the break in continuity occasioned by the children moving at the end of their second or third year, to another site. There seems to be a danger, in these split-site schools, that where an interest in reading has been carefully built up in the Lower School, this may be lost on transfer to the Upper School. Children, faced with different

buildings, a different library system, and sometimes a loss of class libraries, or library periods, provided in their first years in school, may lose some of their interest and motivation to look for books for themselves.

5. Another influence, in some schools, is that of bookshops or book clubs. Where these exist, some children buy books for themselves, which they would not otherwise have done. This influence can work the other way, to discourage, rather than encourage reading. Where there is poor organisation, or lack of advice, children who spend money on books they do not like, are discouraged from further attempts to provide books for themselves.

These general factors can apply to any type of school, grammar, comprehensive or primary, mixed or single-sex schools and while all, or some, of these factors may be influencing the amount and the depth of a child's reading, the school is only one influence competing with other, often more powerful influences of home, the media and the complex network of teenage values, interests and hobbies.

Outside these general factors, there is another consideration of whether some types of schools have more influence than others on the amount of the child's voluntary reading. The Schools Council team (Whitehead 1977) reported that "the school variable which undoubtedly proved to have most influence on amount of reading was school type". They found that there was a strong association between amount of reading and school type, with direct grant schools reading more than grammar schools, grammar schools reading more than comprehensive schools, and comprehensive schools reading more than secondary modern schools. However, when combined, the result for grammar and secondary modern schools, and compared these with results for the comprehensive schools, it was found that the comprehensive schools had higher figures than the selective sector for the number of books listed at both 12+ and 14+.

One of the findings they found unexpected was that there were more non-book-readers in mixed comprehensive schools than in single-sex schools. There were also more heavy readers in the single-sex schools. The Schools Council team said this finding was not easy to interpret and that there was no obvious explanation for it from their data. They suggested that one reason might be the quality of book provision in single-sex schools and the fact that English teachers have a "smaller target area at which to aim" in providing books for only one sex.

In this small-scale study there are five secondary schools. As described in Chapter Two, the researcher decided to use different schools in order to study the association between amount of reading and school type, and this decision influenced the composition of the sample, as explained in Chapter Three. The children in the sample attended 5 different secondary schools, and differences were found between schools with regard to the amount of reading, and the number of non-book-readers. Although the sub-samples in 4 schools consisted of only 5 children in each school, the amount of reading in the grammar schools and in the single-sex schools was greater than in the mixed comprehensive schools. There were also more heavy readers in the grammar, and the single-sex schools. From the findings of this study, some reasons are suggested for this, as will be seen later in this chapter. However, any attempt to examine specific influencing factors in individual schools of different types is complicated by an overlap of other factors, particularly those already identified as major ones, such as social class and ability and attainment. For example, in this survey, many of the children had parents in professional and non-manual occupations, who had deliberately chosen to send their children to the selective grammar school, if they could obtain a place, or to a single-sex school, rather than to the local mixed comprehensive school. In this sample, the children in the grammar school had high scores on all the standardised tests given during the survey. This did not apply to all the children in the single-sex schools. The two single-sex schools are examined more closely at the end of this chapter, with

an attempt to identify some of the factors contributing to the higher number of books listed in single-sex schools. This was thought to be of particular interest because of the comments of the Schools Council research team (1977) on this aspect of their study.

(i) Description of the 5 Secondary Schools

School 1 was a mixed comprehensive school, with approximately 1,200 pupils.

The school had two separate sites, about a mile apart. The children in the first and second years were accommodated at the Lower School. There was some commuting to the Upper School, mainly for Physical Education.

This school was the link school for the primary school used for the survey. Over half the children from the primary school transferred to the link school.

Twenty children from the sample attended School 1. They spent two years in the Lower School, and in the third year of the survey moved to the Upper School.

School 2 was a voluntary-aided grammar school with approximately 1,250 pupils. The school was on one site, with some old buildings and some more recent additions. Five children transferred to this school, three girls and two boys.

School 3 was a girls' comprehensive school with 1,300 pupils. The school had two sites, with the first three years at the Lower School. Thus the five girls in the survey transferred to this school remained on the one site for the duration of the study.

School 4 was a mixed comprehensive school with approximately 1,400 pupils. On one purpose-built site, the school was originally a secondary modern school, and had been extended with the addition of several new buildings.

Five children in the sample were in this school (2 girls and 3 boys).

School 5 was a boys' comprehensive school with 1,095 pupils. The school had two sites, both comprising old buildings, with some new additions. The children moved to the Upper School after two years. Thus the boys in the survey at the school spent two years in the Lower School, and one year in the Upper School during the period of the survey. *

* Additional Note

After two years of the survey, at the end of 1977, two boys left school 5, and moved to a Boarding School in another part of the country. Fortunately the researcher was able to trace them and they completed the questionnaire on the last two occasions, and were interviewed by the researcher in July 1978. Their results are included in the figures for School 5 for 1978. Case studies of both boys can be read in Chapter 9. (Case studies 29 and 30).

(ii) Provision of books in the five secondary schools

In School 1 the children had access to both school and class libraries in both the Upper School and the Lower School. However there was a shortage of space in both buildings. In the Upper School the school library was in a room adapted for the purpose which was inadequate and gave barely enough room for class use. The Head of English had tried to remedy this to some extent by attempting to provide for class libraries. These were looked after by individual English teachers. In the Lower School one of the teachers organised a book club.

In studying literature the emphasis fell mainly on a few books which all the class read at the same time. Other sets and small sets of novels and short stories were available for all classes, and the children were often able to borrow books during English lessons.

School 2 had a large established library with over 20,000 books. The library was spacious with plenty of room for quiet study. The school had no class libraries, and no book clubs or book shop,

but the children had easy access to the school library. In the first year the children were given a reading list of titles obtained from sources outside the classroom. In English lessons most classes tended to read from a wide selection of books, with a small number used for class discussion and reading.

School 3 had purpose-built school libraries on each site, with each class given one period in the library each week, as part of the English timetable. This was used in varying ways by individual English teachers. There were no class libraries, or school bookshop or book club, but the children had regular access to the school library. In English lessons class sets of novels were used, and in studying literature the emphasis fell on a few books which all the class are reading at the same time. A wide selection was available for the use of the English staff. Reading lists were provided by individual English teachers.

In School 4 children had access to both school and class libraries, and in addition the school ran a paperback bookshop which operated in the library every Friday at lunch time. The school library was in a room designed for the purpose, with about 6,500 books. Individual English teachers looked after the class libraries, and first and second years were provided with a reading list of titles.

In studying literature practice varied widely. Class sets and small set books were used in lessons, and there was an attempt to provide class libraries with a wide range of miscellaneous titles as far as possible.

In School 5 the children had weekly library sessions as part of their English timetable while they were in the Lower School. On this site the library was large enough to accommodate a class, and the children thus visited the library weekly. The practice was not continued in the Upper School, where the library was not designed for class use. There were no class libraries. Children had access to the school library on each site.

In studying literature the emphasis fell on a few books which all the class read at the same time. There were class sets and amall sets available.

In all fiye schools the English teaching staff used class sets of course books or comprehension books, in addition to sets of novels. Class sets of thematic or topic-bas~~sed~~ anthologies were also used, and other sets of short stories and plays were used in most classes.

(iv) Comparison of the L Group (Link School) and O Group (other schools)

As already described, the sample was divided into 2 main groups, the L group of 20 children (10 girls, 10 boys) proceeding to the link, neighbourhood, comprehensive school and the O Group of 20 children (10 girls, 10 boys) proceeding to other schools.

It was noted at the time of the pilot study (June 1975) that the children proceeding to the link school were listing less books than those proceeding to the other schools (see page 27).

The researcher next looked at the totals for the boys and girls in each group throughout the three year period.

TABLE 26. TOTAL NUMBER OF BOOKS LISTED IN EACH YEAR.

YEAR TOTALS - GIRLS

	1976	1977	1978	OVERALL
O Group (n = 10)	312	186	152	650
L Group (n = 10)	82	56	25	163
TOTAL	394	242	177	813 books

YEAR TOTALS - BOYS

	1976	1977	1978	OVERALL
O Group (n = 10)	102	122	68	287
L Group (n = 10)	68	58	54	180
TOTAL	170	180	117	469 books

When the children are divided into the school groups (O & L) the actual number of books listed in each year show (1) the same declining pattern for girls and fluctuating pattern for boys as observed in Chapter 5, and (2) consistently less books listed in the link school than in the other schools. The children in the L group listed less than the children in the O Group on all occasions.

TABLE 27. COMPARISON OF THE MEAN SCORES OF NUMBER OF BOOKS LISTED BY THE 2 GROUPS L & O ON SIX OCCASIONS

	Feb. 1976	June 1976	Feb. 1977	June 1977	Feb. 1978	June 1978
GROUP O	9.85	10.35	8.05	7.35	5.95	4.8
GROUP L	3.25	4.25	1.85	3.85	1.9	2.05

When the O and L groups were divided by sex further differences could be seen.

TABLE 28 MEAN SCORES OF NUMBER OF BOOKS LISTED BY THE FOUR GROUPS
ON SIX OCCASIONS

	Feb. 1976	June. 1976	Feb. 1977	June 1977	Feb. 1978	June 1978
Group O Girls	14.9	15.3	11.0	7.6	9.1	6.1
Group L Girls	3.5	4.7	2.2	3.4	1.3	1.2
Group O Boys	4.8	5.4	5.1	7.1	2.8	3.5
Group L Boys	3.0	3.8	1.5	4.3	2.5	2.9

The L Group listed less on each occasion for both girls and boys. For the first three occasions of the survey Group L boys list the least books, but for the last three occasions, of the survey, the group listing the least books was the L group of girls. The mean score for this group in June 1978 is only 1.2 books. The differences between the mean scores for the two groups of boys are less than between the two groups of girls. The mean score for the boys is slightly higher in June than in February for each group.

These figures give a general indication of the difference in the numbers listed between the children who attended the link comprehensive school and the children who proceeded to other schools. However the children in the O Group attended four different schools and the figures can be justified for these separately (each group has 5 children).

TABLE 29. SUB-DIVISION OF THE O GROUP INTO 4 SCHOOL TYPES
MEAN NUMBER OF BOOKS LISTED ON SIX OCCASIONS.

School No.	Feb. 1976	June. 1976	Feb. 1977	June. 1977	Feb. 1978	June 1978
2	23.6	15.8	13.0	9.8	9.2	5.0
4	2.6	4.4	2.6	2.2	2.2	1.4
3	8.6	15.0	9.2	5.4	8.6	7.0
5	4.6	6.2	7.4	12.0	3.8	5.8

The very mean high score (23.6 books) for the children in School 2 in February 1976 is due to the two girls in this school who listed 46 and 41 books respectively on the first occasion. This has already been discussed in Chapter 5. In June 1976 the mean score for School 2 (15.8 books) was almost equalled by that for School 3, the girls' school. On this occasion the two prolific readers in School 2 listed 33 and 24 books respectively and the two girls who listed most in School 3 listed 24 and 22 books respectively.

Thus, with two very heavy girl readers in the grammar school and also two very heavy readers in the single-sex girls' school, the difference between the mean scores for the O Group and the L Group was accentuated throughout the survey for every occasion.

(v) Type of readers in the O and L Groups

TABLE 30. NUMBER OF READERS BY TYPE AND SCHOOL GROUP.

GIRLS

GROUP	O GROUP (n = 10)						L GROUP (n = 10)					
Number of occasion	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Non	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	4	5
Light	0	0	2	2	2	4	3	1	4	5	2	3
Moderate	4	1	1	3	1	2	5	5	4	5	2	2
Heavy	6	9	5	5	6	5	2	4	0	0	0	0

BOYS

GROUP	O GROUP (n = 10)						L GROUP (n = 10)					
Number of Occasion	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Non	2	1	1	0	2	2	2	0	3	0	3	0
Light	2	1	2	3	4	3	3	2	5	3	3	7
Moderate	1	1	1	2	2	3	2	4	2	3	2	1
Heavy	5	7	6	5	2	2	3	4	0	4	2	2

The girls in the O Group had the largest number of heavy readers, whereas in the L Group of girls there were no heavy readers after the first year.

For the boys there were most heavy readers in the O Group in the first two years of the survey, but this levelled in year three to 2 boys who were heavy readers in the O Group and 2 in the L Group. There was some increase in the number of light readers in all groups except the L girls where there was the marked increase in non-readers in the third year.

Number of non-reading pupils by type of school

The researcher had hypothesised that the number of children listing no books would increase over the three year period. Table 31 shows the greatest number of non-readers in the third year.

TABLE 31. NUMBER OF CHILDREN LISTING NO BOOKS ON 6 OCCASIONS.

Year	1976		1977		1978	
Occasion	1	2	3	4	5	6
Both sexes (n = 40)	4	1	6	0	10	8
Girls (n = 20)	0	0	2	0	5	6
Boys (n = 20)	4	1	4	0	5	2

These can be sub-divided again into the two school groups.

TABLE 32. NUMBER OF CHILDREN LISTING NO BOOKS BY SEX AND SCHOOL GROUP.

Occasion	1	2	3	4	5	6
Group L both sexes	2	0	5	0	7	5
Group L Girls	0	0	2	0	4	5
Group L Boys	2	1	1	0	3	3
Group O both sexes	2	1	1	0	3	3
Group O Girls	0	0	0	0	1	1
Group O Boys	2	1	1	0	2	2

In Group L the link comprehensive school, there were no non-readers in June 1976 nor June 1977, and no boy non-readers in any of the June listings. The number of girl non-readers in the L Group in the last year of the survey is 4 in February, and 5 in June, half of the girls in this group with more girl non-readers than boy non-readers in the last year of the survey. In the O Group, one girl from the single-sex school listed no books in the 1st year. The boy non-readers were from different schools on different occasions.

(vi) Comments on the findings in relation to the five secondary schools.

From Tables 28 and 29 several observations can be made in the reading of the children in the sample in relation to:

A. MIXED COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOLS

School 1 - The Link School

As has been noted the children in the link comprehensive school listed less books than the children in the other group on all occasions. This was so from the first pilot study, and continued through the survey. Within the school there were few differences between the girls and the boys in the first year. On the first occasion the children listed books, in February, 1976, the mean score for the girls was 3.5 books and for the boys 3.0 books. The decrease in the number of books listed was greater among the girls than the boys both in 1977 and 1978, and the girls in this school listed the least books of all the groups in the sample. On the last occasion (July 1978) the

mean score for the girls was 1.2 books, whereas for the boys it was 2.9 books.

The figure for the mean score of the girls' listing of books in the last year (1 - 2 books) is lower than that quoted in any previous survey for a similar age-group. Taylor (1972) reports the number of books listed by girls in secondary modern schools in his survey of 1967, as ranging between 2.3 and 2.7 books, and for girls in grammar schools between 2.6 and 2.9 books. Whitehead (1977) reports the number of books listed by girls in the 1971 survey as 2.48 books for the 12+ group and 2.15 books for the 14+group.

In comparison, with the Taylor and Whitehead surveys, the boys' mean scores are not lower than the other surveys. Taylor (1972) reported a range of 1.6 and 2.2 books for secondary modern boys, and 2.6 books for each age group for grammar school boys. Whitehead (1977) reported a mean score of 1.99 books for boys of 12+ and 1.78 books for boys of 14+. In this survey the lowest mean score for Group L boys was 1.5 books and the highest mean score 4.3 books.

Certain factors may influence the number of books listed by the children in this school, one may be the transfer from one site to another at the end of the second year. A second factor may be the shortage of space, and the third the inadequacy of library provision. The second and third factors apply especially in the upper school, where the library was housed in a room adapted for the purpose, which was too small for class use, and quite inadequate for a comprehensive school of this size.

School 4 - the other mixed comprehensive school.

Five children in the sample went to this mixed comprehensive school and comparison of the mean scores of books listed by the children in School 4 and School 1 show a similar range of scores. The scores for School 1 range from 1.85 to 4.25 books and for School 4 from 1.4 to 4.4 books listed. The scores in the two mixed comprehensive schools provide the nearest comparison of groups in the survey. The figures from the other three schools are all higher (see Table 29).

TABLE 33 COMPARISON OF SCHOOL 1 and SCHOOL 4 FOR SIX OCCASIONS

	Feb. 1976	June 1976	Feb. 1977	June 1977	Feb. 1978	June 1978
School 1	3.25	4.25	2.6	2.2	2.2	1.4
School 4	2.6	4.4	1.85	3.85	1.9	2.05

In both schools the figures showed a slight decrease overall from 1976 to 1977 and from 1977 to 1978. The sample was so small in School 4 that it should be stated that any findings could not be applicable to the whole of this school population. However, for the children in the sample, it can be said that the figures show a similarity between the two mixed comprehensive schools. Here it should be noted that, whereas School 1 was on a split site with inadequate book provision, School 4 was on a single site with a purpose-built library, where the children had access to both class and school libraries, and where class libraries provided a wide range of miscellaneous titles.

Another factor, previously mentioned in Chapter Five was the socio-economic groupings of the children in the sample and the finding that children with fathers in manual occupations listed less books. In School 1 75% of the children (15 out of 20) had fathers in manual occupations. In School 4, 80% (4 out of 5) of the children had fathers in manual occupations.

School 2 - The Selective Grammar School.

As seen in Table 29 the mean scores for the children in School 2 ranged from 23.6 books listed in February 1976 to 5 books in June 1978, with a gradual decrease through the three year period.

Once again the sample was small and no generalisation could be made on the whole school population of School 2.

The very high figure in comparison with the other groups was due to the

fact that two girls in this school were heavy readers, who listed more books than other children in the sample. In February, 1976, they listed 46 and 41 books and in July 1976, 33 and 24 books (see individual scores Table 11). One boy in this school read very little, listing no books in both February and July, 1978, and only one book on each occasion in 1977.

The other girl in this school was a heavy reader in 1976 listing 11 and 12 books, then moved into the moderate category in 1977 with 4 and 3 books, and in 1978 fell into the light category listing 2 books on each occasion. The other boy in this school listed books in the heavy category for the first three occasions, and in the moderate category for the remainder of the survey.

The school had a large library and the children were encouraged to read. It seemed that the number of books listed by the children in this group was not greatly influenced by the school. It is possible that this may be associated with the ability of the children. They were all able readers in the Junior school, and obtained high scores on all standardised tests administered in the course of the study.

For the five children their scores on the Schonell Word Recognition Test in the Junior school in June 1975 ranged from 13.3 to 14.8.

On the NFER Verbal Intelligence Test, given in 1977, their scores ranged from 120 to 138. On the Widespan Comprehension test, administered twice, in 1976 and 1978, the lowest score was 115, and the highest 125.

On the APU Vocabulary test, given in 1977, percentiles ranged from 73 to 97. It is possible that many children of high ability, who are able readers from an early age in the Junior school establish individual reading habits and interests before they start their secondary schooling, and are not as likely to be distracted from reading by other interests and pursuits in school and out of school between the ages of 11 and 14 years. It would be difficult to prove this, without examining a much larger sample of children than that studied in this survey. However the indications are that this is a fact and several of the case studies presented later in this report, support this view, not only for children in the selective grammar school, but also for children of high ability in the other schools in the survey.

SINGLE-SEX SCHOOLS

School 3 - The Girls' Comprehensive School

The mean scores of the number of books listed by the girls in School 3 were higher than the scores for either of the mixed comprehensive schools. With an irregular pattern through the period, the highest mean score was 15 books in June 1976 and the lowest mean score 5.4 books in June 1977. Although this school had a split site the girls did not move to the Upper School building until the fourth year, so the children were on one site for the three years of the survey. There was a purpose built library, and regular library periods as part of the English timetable. Of the five girls in this school, two were heavy readers, listing a large number of books in each year of the survey. The girls varied in their listings on different occasions, but for most of the time their listings fell in the heavy or moderate categories. One girl was a moderate reader of books in the first two years, listing between 3 and 5 books on each occasion, then listing no books at all in 1978, choosing to read teenage magazines rather than books. (See Case Study 6).

School 5 - The Boys' Comprehensive School.

The mean scores for the boys' school are also higher than those for those for the mixed comprehensive schools, the highest being 12 books in June, 1977, and the lowest 3.8 books in February, 1978. In the boys' single sex school is seen the pattern which has already been noted for the boys generally, that of higher figures in June than in February for each year of the survey.

Also in School 5, is seen another feature which occurs only in this school. It is a higher figure in 1977 than in 1976. The greater number of books listed by the boys in this school in 1977 (7.4 books is the mean score in February and 12 books in June); is a feature which appears in none of the other schools and the fact that this occurred has influenced the figures seen in the earlier tables for the overall reading of the boys in the sample.

After a study of the book lists, and interviews with the children, it seemed that some of the reasons for the increased reading of the boys in this school

in their second year were due to school influence. The school had a split site, with the first two years in the lower school. The lower school building had a small library, but it was large enough to accommodate a class of children, and each class had a library lesson every week. The researcher spoke to the children during interviews on each occasion, and in 1977 there seemed to be indications that the boys in this school were listing more books due to school influence. In July 1977 all five boys in School 5 were listing numbers in the heavy book reading category and in February 1977, 4 out of 5 boys listed books in the heavy category. One boy in this school who consistently listed a large number of books was a child of high ability with a reading age of 14.1 on the Schonell Word Recognition Test in 1975, and a verbal IQ score of 133 in 1977. He was an individual with a firmly established reading habit and a taste for non-fiction rather than fiction. The other four boys had fluctuating listings, as can be seen. However, the most interesting case for comment here was the boy who listed no books at all in 1976 and in 1977 was becoming interested in reading due to school influence. (See Case Study 28). He listed 5 books in February 1977 and 13 books in July, 1977. It was apparent when talking to him that he had found an interest in books. Unfortunately, when he transferred to the Upper School in 1978, he seemed to lose his interest, listing no books in February, 1978 and 1 book in July, 1978. Indications are that the library provision in the lower school, and the encouragement given to the children by the teachers, were factors influencing the number of books listed by the boys in their first two years at the school.

As mentioned earlier in this report, the high listings by the boys in School 5, in June, 1977, had the effect of raising the mean score for the boys to such an extent that it was higher than the mean score for the girls on this occasion (i.e. 5.7 books compared with 5.5 books).

In the last year of this survey the children from this school moved from the Lower School to the Upper School buildings on another site. The two boys from the group who left School 5, and left the district (Case Studies 29 and 30) continued to list books and their numbers for 1978 are recorded with their original school group (see Table 35).

Of the three boys remaining in School 5, and moving to the Upper School, for one there was no change in the pattern of his reading. For the other two there was a marked decrease in the number of books listed in the third year.

The single-sex schools

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the researcher had intended to look closely at the single-sex schools to examine the factors contributing to the amount of voluntary reading done by the children, in comparison with the children from mixed schools. The findings of the survey had confirmed the view of the Schools Council team (Whitehead 1977) that the amount of reading in single-sex schools was greater than in mixed schools. As in the Schools Council survey, in this small survey there were less non-book readers, and more heavy readers in the single-sex schools than in the mixed schools. As there were only 5 children in each school in this survey it is possible to look closely at various contributing factors.

Table 34 gives the socio-economic group of each child and the scores on the various measures given during the survey. Table 35 gives the number of books listed by the children on the 6 occasions of the survey.

The factor of social class had been found by the Schools Council (1977) to be one of the major factors associated with amount of book reading. In these 2 single-sex schools it could be seen as a major factor in the group of 5 boys, as 4 of them had fathers in non-manual occupations. In the group of 5 girls only 2 of them had fathers in non-manual occupations, but from Table 35 it can be seen that these were the two girls who were very heavy readers throughout the survey.

TABLE 34 SCORES OF THE CHILDREN IN THE SINGLE-SEX SCHOOLS ON VARIOUS MEASURES GIVEN DURING THE SURVEY.

	I.D. No.	Socio- economic group	Schonell Test	Widespan Test 1976	Widespan Test 1978	NFER Verbal Test 1977	Attitude Test 1977
5 Girls	6	4	10.9	107	100	88	62
	7	2	13.5	109	112	105	81
	8	3(ii)	10.8	103	104	108	65
	9	3(ii)	12.1	94	106	92	81
	10	2	13.8	107	102	91	94
5 Boys	26	1	14.1	106	104	133	76
	27	1	14.8	116	121	135	90
	28	3(ii)	11.6	100	99	99	69
	29	1	9.0	84	83	88	72
	30	1	13.1	107	106	100	89

TABLE 35 NUMBER OF BOOKS LISTED BY THE CHILDREN IN THE SINGLE-SEX SCHOOLS

	1976		1977		1978		
I.D. No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
5 Girls	6	4	5	3	3	0	0
	7	12	24	11	4	15	8
	8	6	11	1	4	5	7
	9	4	13	7	4	6	3
	10	17	22	24	12	17	17
5 Boys	26	10	12	9	12	12	15
	27	1	6	10	15	0	5
	28	0	0	5	13	0	1
	29	5	6	9	5	1	4
	30	7	7	4	15	6	4

Another major factor associated with the amount of book reading in The Schools Council Survey was ability and attainment. In this small survey this was also the case. Scores on the Widespan Tests and the NFER Verbal Test correlated significantly with the number of books listed by the children.

An examination of Tables 34 and 35 reveals that, although many children listing books in the 'heavy' category did have high scores on standardised tests, this was not necessarily true for every child.

In fact a study of the ten children in this sample in single sex schools seems to indicate that they were all readers, irrespective of social class, or of high or low ability and attainment. These two factors may have influenced the kind of books and magazines they choose to read and in most cases children consistently listing large numbers of books either had fathers in non-manual occupations, or had high scores on standardised tests, or both. The case studies provide examples of different kinds of readers in both schools. All the children were choosing to read something in their leisure time. The girl who listed no books in 1978 was reading 10 or 12 teenage magazines every week and the boy who listed only one book in 1978 was reading newspapers and technical magazines (Case Study 28).

Overall, the children seemed to have a favourable attitude towards reading, and this may be considered in relation to their scores on the attitude scale, administered in June 1977. The attitude scale was devised by the researcher for use with this sample of children. The contribution and use of the scale are described in detail in the next chapter of this study. The pilot study, with over 200 children had produced a mean score of 62 out of 100. In the single sex schools no child scored less than 62, and some of the children had very high scores (see Table 34), half of them scoring over 80 on the scale. Taking examples from the table of case studies 9 and 10, it can be seen that high scores on the attitude scale occurred in cases where children had low ability scores and came from different social backgrounds.

There are many factors contributing to the high mean scores of the books listed by the children in the single-sex schools, and some of these factors

are so inextricably entwined with others that it would be difficult to consider them separately. The scores on the attitude scale suggest that all the children were interested in reading (See Table 37, Chapter 7).

Perhaps the most that can be said is that where the majority of children in a group has a positive attitude towards reading it seems likely that this attitude is associated with school influence, or with school type, or both.

CHAPTER SEVEN

ATTITUDE AND PERSONALITY

The researcher hoped to consider the aspects of each child's attitude towards reading, and his/her personality, and to use these findings particularly in the individual case studies of the children. While the researcher expected to discover something about each child's attitude and personality by observation in interviewing sessions, she also wished to administer measures which might provide additional information.

As both these areas were relatively new in educational research, it was difficult to find suitable measures to use with the children in this particular sample. After investigating reports of previous work in attitude measurement the researcher decided to construct her own attitude scale specifically for use with this sample. In studying personality, several researchers had used the Junior Eysenck Personality Inventory since 1965, and it was decided to use this measure with the children in the sample, to see whether there was any association between the amount of the children's voluntary reading and their scores for extroversion or neuroticism on the Junior Eysenck Personality Inventory.

The researcher hypothesised, firstly, that there would be a significant relationship between the number of books listed and the scores on the attitude scale, and, secondly, that there would be a significant relationship between the number of books listed and the scores for neuroticism on the Junior Eysenck Personality Inventory. Results of the two measures supported the first hypothesis, but not the second. The use of the two measures are described in detail in this chapter.

(i) The Eysenck Junior Personality Inventory.

The Junior Eysenck Personality Inventory is an adaptation of the adult version of the E.P.I. The manual (E.1965b) suggests that neuroticism can be measured adequately at all the age levels studied but that extraversion is a personality dimension which is not clearly emerging

until the age of 9 or 10. When constructing the Junior Scale, on the basis of factor analyses, 60 suitable items were chosen for the final scale, 24 measuring E, 24 N, and 12 constituting the Lie scale. Standardisation data was collected from two samples of children. The scores showed a marked increase in extraversion for boys with age, and a less marked one for girls. The table for neuroticism scores shows a clear increase with age for girls, but no change for boys. Scores for the Lie scale show a decrease in lying with age, for both boys and girls.

The manual concludes, "It appears therefore that boys are more extraverted than girls, a finding not unexpected in view of the previous observations with adult samples that men are more extraverted than women," and adds, "It appears to be a fact that girls become more unstable with increasing age, whereas boys appear to remain at very much the same level." The notes in the manual Eysenck (1965b) commented that too little is known about the validity of the Junior Scale "to make any claims for its use, other than as an instrument for experimentation," adding that it was hoped that work would be done in the educational field in various applications of the J.E.P.I.

The scale has been used by educational researchers, mostly to study the relationship between personality and school attainment. Some of these are relevant to this study. Eysenck's personality theory suggests that the introvert should be at an advantage in school learning. He states, "The typical introvert... is a quiet retiring sort of person, introspective, fond of books rather than people." (Eysenck 1965a).

Entwistle and Cunningham (1968), using the scale with 2,995 children in Aberdeen, found that scores for neuroticism showed a significant correlation with school attainment, and that children with high N scores tended to be more successful. This was true for boys and girls. The researchers comment, "From behaviour patterns and Eysenck's personality theory, the introvert should reach a higher standard on average from the extravert in school work." They found that girls

who were stable extraverts and boys who were stable introverts showed the highest mean attainment scores in their results and why this should be true of boys and not of girls they regarded as a puzzling aspect of their findings. They ask, "Does the female introvert withdraw too completely from normal class interaction in the learning process and thus fail to learn as effectively as the introverted boy?" Finally, the hypothesis that among bright children neurotic introversion would be associated with scholastic success had to be rejected.

Finlayson (1970) studying boys only, looked at the relationship between extraversion, neuroticism and school attainment in 12, 13 and 14 year olds in one Grammar school. He found that introverts obtained progressively higher marks in yearly examinations, than extraverts, and that for both E and N effects increased with age.

As these two studies indicated that scores for neuroticism showed significant correlation with high scores for school attainment, the researcher was interested to discover whether scores for neuroticism correlated significantly ^{with} the amount of reading children chose to do in their leisure time.

The researcher used the J.E.P.I. with the 40 children in this longitudinal study in June 1976, at the end of their first year in the secondary school. The children were mostly 12 year olds, the exceptions being the children with July and August birthdays.

The mean scores on the J.E.P.I. for the sample showed some differences from the norms given in the J.E.P.I. Manual. The mean scores for the girls were lower than those given in the manual for both extraversion and neuroticism. The mean score for the boys were higher than the norms in the manual for both extraversion and neuroticism. The tests to compare the scores of the girls and boys showed no significant differences for either E or N scores.

TABLE 36 Mean scores on the J.E.P.I.

Variable	Sex	Number of cases	Mean Score	S.D.	Score in Eysenck manual
EE	Girls	20	16.90	3.7	17.354
EE	Boys	20	18.35	4.0	17.38
EN	Girls	20	10.85	3.4	12.487
EN	Boys	20	12.85	3.8	11.018
EL	Girls	20	4.7	2.15	4.44
EL	Boys	20	2.15	2.37	4.14

The researcher had hypothesised that there would be a significant correlation between the scores for neuroticism and the number of books listed by the children, but this proved not to be the case. There was no significant correlation between E or N scores and the amount read, for either boys or girls, or when the sample was taken as a whole. (Girls n = 20. Boys n = 20).

The researcher concluded that there was no significant correlation between scores on the J.E.P.I., and the number of books listed by the children

(ii) The Attitude Measure

In seeking information on the measurement of attitudes to reading the researcher found that evidence of work in this field was sparse. There were two American instruments, one by Estes (1971) and one by Kennedy and Halinski (1975). Of work in Great Britain there was none

for use with secondary school children. Of the measures designed in Great Britain all three were for use with children aged 8-9 years. These were Dunham's Reading Attitude Scale (1959), Williams' Scale (1965) and (Georgiades' Scale (1967). Two of these, the Dunham and Georgiades, were used with retarded readers. None of these scales had been followed up and developed for general use. Meanwhile, in Great Britain James Ewing, of Dundee College of Education, was about to embark on a two-year project (1977-79) on attitude measurement, financed by the Scottish Education Department, but no measures were available from the Scottish project in 1977. The researcher proceeded to design an attitude measure for use with the sample of children. The measure was designed in the Spring of 1977. From the February taped interviews the researcher made an items pool of 35 statements. A Likert scale was chosen for the instrument. The researcher decided to use a Likert scale, preferring this to either the Thurstone or the Guttman procedure. The Thurstone procedure was rejected as it requires a number of judges to categorise the items in the first stage. The Guttman procedure was rejected because it is thought to be "subject to errors in construction"* where a large number of respondents are involved, and the researcher intended to carry out pilot tests with a large number of children. The number of items on a Likert scale is usually small and the researcher did not wish to construct a lengthy scale which 12 year olds would be reading for themselves.

In addition, the reliability of Likert Scales is thought to be high. A.N. Oppenheim (1966) notes that "a reliability co-efficient of .85. is often achieved".* He also noted that Likert scales tend to perform to a rough ordering of people with regard to any particular attitude. Finally, as it operates on a five-point scale, the researcher preferred the Likert Scale as the scale would easily be understood by the children in the survey. The five-point scale was as follows:- Strongly Agree, Agree, Uncertain, Disagree and Strongly Disagree (see Appendix. 4).

As the children in the survey were, in 1977, in their second year of secondary schooling, the pilot study was carried out with a similar age range in a comprehensive school, which was not one of the schools in

* A.N. OPPENHEIM (1966) Questionnaire Design and Attitude Measurement.
(Chapter 6)

the survey. The school had a nine-class entry and the researcher used all the children in the second year.

The first phase of the study was conducted with five classes spread over the whole ability range of the second year. On the days the measure was used there were 120 children present in the 5 classes (60 girls and 60 boys).

An instruction sheet was issued with each question sheet. The researcher administered the scale and read the instructions to the children before they started the work. The times taken for the children to complete the sheets were noted on each occasion. The times taken by individual children ranged from 5 to 15 minutes. There were 120 completed sheets. The data was processed for reliability using S.P.S.S. (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, 1975). From the results, the 35 questions were reduced to 24 by rejecting the items below 0.3 on item analysis. The 24 items with a co-efficient above .3 were retained for the second phase of the pilot study.

P. Kline suggests that "in personality testing it is usual to regard item total analysis of 0.3 as just about sufficient to make an item worthy of inclusion in a scale" (Kline, 1973). The split correlation for the 24 items was, $r = 0.77666$ ($n = 24$). When the Equal Length Spearman-Brown correction was applied, the co-efficients were raised to 0.87429 ($n = 24$). Of the 24 questions retained 8 were negatively worded.

In the second phase of the study the researcher administered the 24 item scale to the other 4 parallel classes in the same year group with the same range of ability as the classes used in Phase I. The same instruction sheet was used and the same procedure followed. Of the children present on this occasion, there were 52 girls and 44 boys ($n = 98$). The sheets were collected and processed as before (S.P.S.S.). This time 4 questions were shown to be borderline on a factor analysis result (Questions 1, 2, 12 and 14). Except for these 4 questions all the others were clearly heavily loaded on the first factor, estimated as a 'reading interest' factor. On the item-analysis question 1, 2,

12 and 14 had readings of less than .3.

Question 1 read; "When I hear friends talking about a new book
I want to get it to read for myself"

Question 2 read; "When I study a book in English lessons I try
to remember the name of the author"

Question 12 read; "I do not like to receive book tokens for presents"

Question 14 read; "If I see a good film or television series I like
to get the book to read afterwards".

These questions were dropped.

The remaining 20 questions constituted the final scale and had
correlations of over .3 with the total score.

For the 20 questions there was an increase in the reliability
co-efficient. The split-half co-efficient read, correlation between
forms .806. When the Spearman-Brown correction was applied the
co-efficient was raised to .89. Thus the reliability co-efficient
for the final scale is .89. Scoring from 5 to 1 on the Likert Scale,
the scale is scored out of 100.

On the results of the pilot studies the mean score for the scale was 62,
and the standard deviation was 13.

Like the other scales mentioned above (Dunham 1959, Williams 1965,
Georgiades 1967) this scale was designed for use with a specific group
of children. Thus one limitation of the scale lies in the fact that it
was used with only one age group of second-year secondary pupils. Also,
although internal reliability reached an acceptable level (.89) no
validation studies were carried out. Aware of the limitations, and
accepting that the scale could only be regarded as an experimental
version, the researcher decided to proceed with the use of the scale
with the 40 children in her sample.

Using the Attitude Measure with the 40 children in the survey.

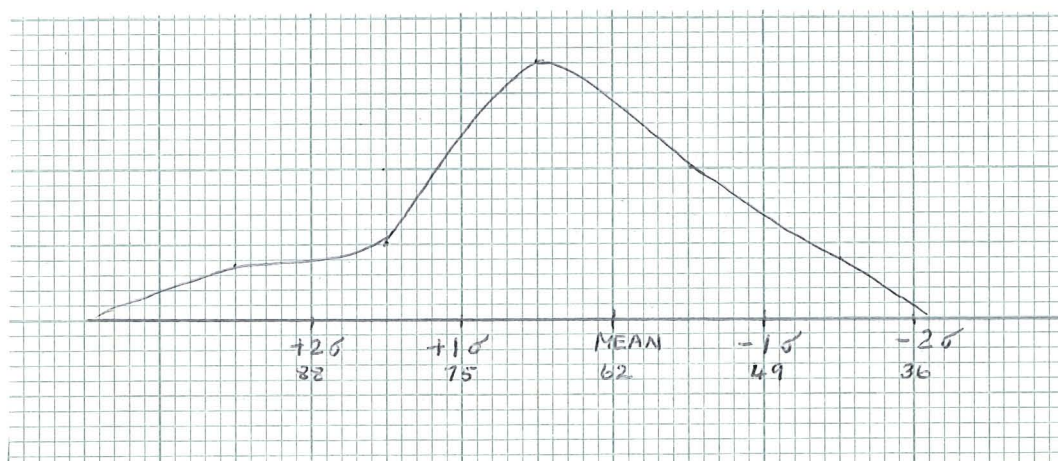
The scale was used with the children in the research sample in July 1977. Of the 40 children in the sample, 27 scored between 50 and 75, that is one standard deviation either side of the mean of 62.

TABLE 37. Distribution of Scores on the Attitude Scale.

Score	Number of children	Suggested interpretation of scores
88 and over	4	Exceptionally interested
75 - 87	5	Very interested
62 - 74	17	Interested
50 - 61	10	Not very interested
49 and under	4	Uninterested

The scores for the children in the sample are reasonably normally distributed, as is shown on the frequency curve.

FREQUENCY CURVE SHOWING SCORES ON THE ATTITUDE SCALE.



The fact that 26 children in the sample scored 62 or over on the measure may reflect a high general interest in reading in this sample of 40 children. As the mean score had been obtained from the pilot study, where the scale was used with the children of the same age in the second year in a neighbourhood comprehensive school, the possibility must be considered that the scores for the sample may indicate a higher interest or a "better attitude" towards reading on the part of some of the children at least, because they were involved in the survey. In any survey of this kind the researcher accepts that some respondents may be subject to a 'Hawthorn' effect, and that some may respond to certain questions in certain ways because they feel it is socially desirable to do so. However, the researcher did not regard these effects as having any major influence on the children's response. She met the children twice yearly. There were long gaps between visits and the children were never forewarned of the visits. The occasion of the administration of the attitude scale, June 1977, was the fourth visit of the survey.

TABLE 38. Scores on the attitude scale in relation to sex and school.

	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Schools</u>				
			1	2	3	4	5
Exceptionally Interested	2	2	0	1	1	0	2
Very Interested	3	2	2	0	2	0	1
Interested	10	7	8	3	2	2	2
Not Very Interested	4	6	7	1	0	2	0
Uninterested	1	3	3	0	0	1	0
	20	20	20	5	5	5	5

Sex Differences

As will be seen from Table 37, of the 26 children scoring over 62, 15 were girls and 11 were boys. In the category of children exceptionally

interested in reading there were 2 boys and 2 girls, and in the category of uninterested there were 3 boys and one girl.

Schools

From the results it can be seen that the children from the single-sex schools obtained high scores on the attitude scale, compared with children from mixed comprehensive schools. This has already been discussed in Chapter 6. A comparison of the mean scores on the attitude scale between the link comprehensive school and the single-sex schools shows, for the girls in the single-sex school a mean of 76.6 against a mean score of 62.7 for the girls in the mixed school, and for the boys in the single-sex school, a mean score of 79.1 against a mean score of 59.6 for the boys in the mixed school.

TABLE 39. Mean scores on the attitude scale by school.

School 1)	Girls	62.7)	both sexes 61.15
)	Boys	59.6)	
School 2		Mixed	70.8		
School 3		Girls	76.6		
School 4		Mixed	60.2		
School 5		Boys	79.1		

The correlation* between attitude towards reading as measured on the scale and the number of books listed was significant at the 0.001 level.

Some observations on the scores

It is questionable whether attitude measures might be of use to teachers in the classroom, and, if such measures are designed how much they will be used by teachers. Most teachers would feel they could assess intuitively, or by observation, the attitudes towards reading of the children in their classes. The researcher felt it had been of value to obtain a measure of the attitude towards reading of the

*

children in this group. The use of such a measure gave an additional slant on the reading of the children. It appeared that scores on the attitude scale had no relation to ability. A child with high scores on standardised tests might score low on the attitude scale and vice versa. For instance, one child with a low score on the N.F.E.R. Verbal test and low scores for comprehension and vocabulary, on the Widespan Reading Test and the A.P.U. Vocabulary Test, scored 81 on the attitude scale; whereas two boys with high scores for intelligence and comprehension on the above tests, scored 47 and 40 respectively on the attitude scale.

Scores on the attitude scale in relation to the ability and attainment of individual children, are discussed in some of the case studies, later in this report.

To conclude, the researcher would observe that attitude measurement may be of use to teachers in the classroom if suitable scales are devised. This is a growing area of research and it hoped that such measures will be available in the future, whether from the project at Dundee College of Education or from individual research projects.

For published article on the Attitude Scale see Appendix 7.

CHAPTER EIGHT

READING INTERESTS

Introduction

The longitudinal study aimed to study the reading habits and interests of children in the sample.

As suggested in Chapter 2, in defining the area of study, interests are difficult to examine. They may be "fairly settled dispositions" (Wilson 1971) and, in individuals, may therefore be less subject to change over a period of time. While it is possible to make general statements about the reading interests of a group of children, within the group the interests of each individual may be unique to that individual, and best examined by means of case studies. The researcher kept detailed records of each child in the survey, and the reading interests of children aged 11 to 14 years may be illustrated by reference to the case studies described in the next chapter of this report. Meanwhile some general observations can be made with regard to the sample as a whole. The study of children's interests began in June 1975, when the children in the year group (n = 120) at the top of the junior school were asked to complete a questionnaire. One question attempted to discover the influences governing the child's choice of books. Results showed that the children thought their choice was not influenced much by what people said, but that they chose from their own interests, and from the look of the book. Following these two factors, the influence of films and television was listed higher than library membership, or school provision or recommendations from parents, friends or teachers. (See Appendix I).

The children were also asked to name their favourite categories of fiction. A wide range was covered. Science-fiction and adventure stories headed the boys' lists, and humorous stories and animal stories the girls' lists. The overall lists for boys and girls taken together showed that Picture and Cartoon stories were the most popular kinds of reading. The lists of book titles reflected this in the large number of Annuals mentioned. Sixty-eight authors were mentioned,

mostly children's writers, the exceptions being names like Dickens and Shakespeare. The favourite writer was Enid Blyton, mentioned 37 times, with Michael Bond in second place, mentioned 18 times.

Among the writers mentioned twice or more, there were a number of the highly regarded children's writers of the last three decades, Alan Garner, William Mayne, Lucy Boston, Nina Bawden, Joan Aiken, Penelope Lively, C.S. Lewis, Nicholas Fisk and Richard Adams.

Only one book was mentioned three times, and that was Black Beauty (incidentally the book mentioned most by the 10+ age group in the Schools Council questionnaire in 1971). A list of books and authors mentioned appears in Appendix I.

The lists reflect various influences. The fact that Alan Garner was mentioned 12 times and gained third place in the list of favourite authors was due to the fact that one of the fourth year teachers, himself a Garner fan, had read The Weirdstone of Brisingamen aloud to the children as a serial, and infected them with some of his own enthusiasm. Books by Aiken, Bawden, Lively, Boston and Fisk had been read and discussed by a group of the most-able children who met once a week to discuss their favourite books. The influence of the media is reflected in titles of books associated with current film and T.V. programmes. Among the books mentioned more than once are Little Town on the Prairie, The Wombles, Planet of the Apes, Lassie Come Home and The Six Million Dollar Man.

A comparison of the favourite authors of the year group (n = 120) and the sample group (n = 40) shows few differences in the first 15 names on each list.

TABLE 40. Favourite Authors at the age of 10+.

<u>Year Group (n = 120)</u>	<u>Sample Group (n = 40)</u>
1. <u>Enid Blyton</u>	1. <u>Enid Blyton</u>
2. <u>Michael Bond</u>	2. <u>Michael Bond</u>
3. <u>Alan Garner</u>	3. <u>Nina Bawden</u>
4. <u>C.S. Lewis</u>	<u>W.E. Johns</u>
5. <u>A. Hitchcock</u>	<u>Roald Dahl</u>
6. <u>Penelope Lively</u>	6. <u>Alan Garner</u>
<u>Lewis Carroll</u>	<u>C.S. Lewis</u>
<u>Joan Aiken</u>	<u>A. Hitchcock</u>
9. <u>Roald Dahl</u>	<u>Noel Streatfield</u>
<u>Richard Adams</u>	10. <u>Richard Adams</u>
<u>Ursula Le Guin</u>	<u>Ursula Le Guin</u>
<u>Nina Bawden</u>	<u>Penelope Lively</u>
<u>W.E. Johns</u>	<u>Nicholas Fisk</u>
<u>Spike Milligan</u>	<u>H.G. Wells</u>
<u>Anthony Buckeridge</u>	<u>Paul Brickhill</u>

From the year group of 120 children, 40 children were chosen for longitudinal study, as described in Chapter 3. In 1976 the researcher began her twice-yearly visits to the secondary schools, meeting the children in February each year, and again in June or early July. Data was thus collected twice a year for three years, six occasions in all. Some data was collected by questionnaires (see Appendix 3) and some by interviews. Some of the data from the questionnaire has already been discussed in Chapter 5. The questionnaire collected information of other kinds, and some of this is discussed in this chapter. The researcher has chosen not to present all the information in statistical form for the 40 children, as she did not think this would produce any generalisable results for a small sample. However this information

is used in individual case studies where relevant.

Also the researcher has not attempted to present all the book titles listed by the children on each occasion during the survey, as she felt that such an exercise with a small sample of 40 children would produce mostly lists of books mentioned once only. As already noted, even with the group of 120 children in 1975 only one book was mentioned more than twice (Black Beauty, 3 times). The sections of this chapter on children's books and adult fiction discuss books, and the individual case studies mention the titles of books read by each child and cover a wide range of interests.

The questionnaire did not ask children to name either favourite books or favourite authors. These were always discussed in the interviews. When talking to the children individually the researcher tried to find out whether the child had a current favourite writer, and also asked the interviewee to name books enjoyed most in the last half year, and books read and enjoyed in English lessons. At the end of the survey each child was invited to name a book he or she thought was outstanding.

From the information collected in the three years of the survey, from the questionnaires and from the interviews, the researcher has selected the following aspects for inclusion in this chapter; (i) ownership of books (ii) library membership (iii) the influence of friends (iv) television viewing and book reading (v) the cinema and book reading (vi) magazine and comic reading (vii) favourite writers (viii) the reading of children's books (ix) the reading of adult fiction and (x) books read in English lessons.

(i) Ownership of books

The children's answers to Question 6 "Where did you get the book from?", showed that the column with the most ticks in every year was the 4th response "it belongs to me". The books children read most were their own books. Sometimes these were re-readings of favourite books, sometimes books which had been acquired from older brothers or sisters,

and some books were received for presents. However, evidence in the case studies suggests that, increasingly, as the children grew older, these were books bought with their own money. This feature emerges as a dominant one in several cases and many children were prepared to spend their money on books. They like to own books, and to read and re-read their favourite books. Another interesting factor here is that there were more re-readings of books in the June listings than in the February listings especially of children who listed a lot of books. Once again there is evidence of this in several case studies.

The children's response to Question 19, "Do you ever buy books with your own money?", showed that in 1976, 30 children were buying books for themselves, in 1977, 18 children spent money on books, and in 1978, 24 children. On Question 12, "Do you own any books yourself?", all but 2 of the children owned books.

Table 41 shows the number of responses to each section.

TABLE 41. Responses to number of books owned. Question 12.

	None	Up to 10	Up to 25	Up to 50	Up to 100	Over 100
1976	2	6	8	6	9	9
1977	1	7	9	8	8	7
1978	2	8	8	10	3	9

The numbers fluctuate but this is not surprising as many of the children gave away books to younger siblings, or to jumble sales, as they outgrew the books and bought new ones for themselves.

All these factors, the children's response to Question 6, their willingness to spend money on books, and their love of re-reading favourite books, point to the ownership of books as one of the strongest influences affecting the choice of reading.

(ii) Library membership

Secondly, an important influence is borrowing books from a library. The responses to Question 6 show that in 1976 more children were using the school libraries than public libraries, but that this was reversed in 1977 and 1978, when more children used the public library than used the school library. There is increased use of the public library noted in several of the individual case studies. Table 42 shows the percentage of children reading their own books, children using a public library and children using a school library in the 3 years of the survey.

TABLE 42.

Percentages of response to the three factors mentioned most in Question 6

	1976	1977	1978
Children reading their own books	62.5%	60%	52.5%
Children using a public library	42.5%	40%	32.5%
Children using a school library	55%	22.5%	15%

As the table shows, more than half of the children were listing books they owned themselves in all three years of the survey. The numbers of children listing books from the public library decreased a little from year to year. Whereas the numbers of children using the school library showed a marked decrease from 55% in the first year of the survey, to less than half this number in the second year, and to only 15% of the children in the third year listing books obtained from the school library.

In the other categories in Question 6, on the source of books listed, the category listed least in 1977 and 1978 was the class library. 5 children said they had read books from a class library in 1976, and only 1 child borrowed a book from a class library in years two and three of the survey.

The influence of family and friends, which emerge as strong influences in a few of the individual case studies, appear in fourth and fifth positions on the list of sources in Question 6, in 1976 and 1977, though "borrowed from a friend" moves into 3rd position on the list in 1978.

TABLE 43. Responses to Question 6. "Where did you get the book from?"

In 1976

1. The book belongs to me.
2. I got it from the school library.
3. I got it from the public library.
4. I borrowed it from someone in the family.
5. I borrowed it from a friend.
6. I got it from the class library.
7. I got it somewhere else.

In 1977

1. The book belongs to me.
2. I got it from the public library
3. I got it from the school library.
4. I borrowed it from a friend.
5. I borrowed it from someone in the family.
6. I got it somewhere else.
7. I got it from the class library.

In 1978

1. The book belongs to me.
- 2 I got it from the public library
3. I borrowed it from a friend.
4. I borrowed it from someone in the family.
5. I got it from the school library.
6. I got it somewhere else.
7. I got it from the class library.

In the third year of the survey the children were reading their own books, in many cases books they they had bought for themselves, and borrowing books from the public library and from friends, rather than from the school library, or the class library when there was one available. Only a few children borrowed books from members of their family.

(iii) The influence of friends in the peer group.

The category "borrowed from friends" in Question 6 of the questionnaire, had moved to third place in the listings for 1978. The researcher felt that this was a strong influence by the third year, which may not be stressed enough in a survey approach but is a feature in several of the case studies. Some children were greatly influenced by the opinions and recommendations of friends. Children who buy books lend them to others. Children who like books recommend them to others. Favourite books, popular books, "unsuitable" books, are passed round a group of friends, or even a class of children. In interviews children talked about sharing books with friends, or siblings, and discussed books they had borrowed from friends.

The influence of friends for some children was a major influence. In many cases, however, it was linked with another factor, which emerges as a dominant influence on the children's reading. This is the influence of the media. Often in the choice of a book to read there is a double influence of television, or film, and a friend's recommendation of the book. This occurs time and time again in the interviews with the children, as they talk about the books they have listed.

(iv) Television viewing and book reading.

The questionnaire asked the children (Question 13) to estimate the number of hours a day they spent watching television, on a weekday and at the weekend.

Table 44 shows the percentage of children in each category.

TABLE 44. Television viewing percentages in each category

	Hours per day	None	$\frac{1}{2}$ hour	1 hour	2 hours	Over 3 hours
<u>WEEKDAY</u>	(1976	2.5%	2.5%	15%	30%	50%
	(1977	2.5%	2.5%	12.5%	42.5%	40%
	(1978	5%	5%	20%	30%	40%
<u>WEEKEND</u>	(1976	-	2.5%	7.5%	10%	80%
	(1977	-	2.5%	7.5%	10%	80%
	(1978	-	2.5%	10%	22.5%	65%

It can be seen from the table that 80% of the children were watching 2 or 3 hours television, or more, every day, whether a weekday or a Saturday or Sunday. This finding was not surprising as the Schools Council Survey had reported an average viewing figure of 2.49 hours on a weekday in 1971 (Whitehead 1977) with two fifths of the sample watching more than 3 hours per weekday evening.

A survey conducted by James Catterick for Pye Television in 1978 indicated much higher viewing hours, reporting that two children in every three were watching television between 3 and 5 hours a day.

The Catterick report consists largely of detailed tables of viewing habits, and favourite programmes of the children in the survey. Their ages ranged from 7 to 17 years, and the findings are presented in age bands of 7-10 years, 11-14 years and 15-17 years. Of course, the report does not make any comment on children's reading habits, but there are aspects of the report which are of relevance for this study. One aspect is the listing of children's favourite television programmes, as frequently books are published associated with popular series on television. For example, Starsky and Hutch, The Six Million Dollar Man

and Charlie's Angels, some of the most popular programmes, all have stories in paperbacks, with cover pictures of television stills. A second aspect is the serialisation of the books, both adult novels and children's books. In both cases a reader may decide to obtain the book to read after seeing the television programme. In the interviews children were asked which books on their lists they had obtained because of television influence. In the first year, 1976, the titles mentioned were mostly of children's books. After the first year the titles were mostly of adult books.

Books associated with television programmes.

Titles mentioned in 1976

The Little House on the Prairie
The Secret Garden
A Little Princess
Black Beauty
The Worzel Gummidge Books
A Wizard of Earthsea
Ballet Shoes
The Wombles
The Apple Dumpling Gang
The Tomorrow People
The Changes (from the book called The Weathermonger)
The Sword in the Stone
Thursday's Child
The Secret of Santa Vittoria
The Jungle Book
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory
The Amazing Mr. Blunden
Jane Eyre
David Copperfield
Great Expectations
The Diddakoi
Three Men in a Boat
The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes
Tom's Midnight Garden
Treasure Island
The Wooden House
Heidi

Follyfoot
Carrie's War
The Railway Children
Mary Poppins
The Prince and the Pauper

Titles mentioned more than once in 1977 and 1978

The Case Book of Sherlock Holmes
I, Claudius
Claudius, the God
King Solomon's Mines
It Shouldn't Happen to a Vet
The Sweeney
The Six Million Dollar Man
Starsky and Hutch
Murder on the Orient Express
The Professionals
Charlie's Angels
On Her Majesty's ^{Secret} Service

A few children were still listing books like Little House on the Prairie, but these were infrequent listings after 1976.

For the children who read a lot the influence of television is just one factor among many, but for the light readers, who are reluctant or unwilling to look for books themselves, and never visit a library, the influence of the media may be dominant, or the only, influence on the choice of books. This is apparent in some of the case studies.

(v) The Cinema and Book Reading

The same factors as seen in television influence apply in the influence of the cinema on the children's choice of books. But as the children visit the cinema less than they watch television, less book titles are listed which are associated with films, than are associated with television programmes. Sometimes, once again two influences are linked. The influences of the media and the peer group are at work together.

The best example is to be seen in the popularity of the book Jaws by Peter Benchley, listed by almost half the children in the survey in 1976, either in February or in June. It was the book most listed in 1976. The film had been showing at local cinemas and the book was easily available in paperback. Some boys said it was the best book they had ever read. The book was recommended to friends, or by friends, or passed around a group. Several children bought a copy. From hearing the children talk about the book at interviews, the researcher can suggest some of the reasons for its popularity among the children, in the first year of the survey, at 12+. They were just beginning to experiment with adult fiction. The book contained violence, bloodshed and sex, ingredients many of them had not yet encountered in children's books. To read this type of adult book for the first time was a new experience for them. Some of the children who listed the book one occasion, listed it again six months later as a title re-read.

The same phenomenon occurs again, but with less children listing the books in 1977 and 1978 in the listings of The Omen and The Exorcist. Once again the films were on the local circuit and the books currently available in paperback, with stills from the films as cover pictures. Again some children bought a copy, and some borrowed a copy from a friend.

(vi) Comic and Magazine Reading

Question 1 on the questionnaire asked the children to list the names of comics and magazines which they read regularly. In each year of the survey there were some children who listed no comics or magazines.

TABLE 45 The number of children listing comics and magazines
in the three year of the survey.

Number of magazines or comics.	1976	1977	1978
0	9	5	12
1	6	6	5
2	9	11	4
3	4	6	6
4	3	4	4
5	5	0	5
6	3	2	0
7	1	2	2
8	0	3	0
10	0	0	1
12	0	1	0
13	0	0	1
Total	40	40	40

As can be seen from the table the majority of children did not read a lot of comics. More than half the sample read either 1 or 2 comics or no comics in each year of the survey.

TABLE 46. Comic readers divided into 4 categories

	1976	1977	1978
No comics	9	5	12
1/2 comics	15	17	9
3/4 comics	7	10	10
5 or over	8	8	8
	40	40	40

A division of the readers into 4 categories shows some increase in comic and magazine reading as the survey progressed, but this is slight. The number of children listing no comics in 1976 was made up of 2 boys and 7 girls, and in 1978 was made up of 10 boys and 2 girls.

With a small sample of 40 children the numbers involved were too small to make it worthwhile to list all the titles mentioned, as many of them are mentioned once only.

Comics mentioned more than twice each year by boys were Beezer, Topper, Beano, Dandy, Cor, Monster Fun, Battle, Shoot and Scoop.

Comics mentioned more than twice by girls in 1976 were Look-in, TV Comic, Judy, Tammy, Pink, Mates, Blue Jeans, Jackie, Mandy and Fab 208.

In 1977 other titles added were Starsky and Hutch, Magic, Disco 45, O.K., Diana, Lindy and Judy and Whoopee. In 1978 all the same titles were listed with an increase in readership of Jackie, Oh Boy and Mates as the three teenage magazines most mentioned. Jackie was the magazine mentioned most over the three years of the survey, listed by 3 girls in 1976, 12 girls in 1977 and by 8 girls in 1978.

(Vii) Favourite Writers

On each occasion the researcher met the children she found that a number of children were unable or unwilling to name a favourite writer. Some of these were children who were not interested in reading, but others were children who were reading so widely that they felt they did not have any one favourite writer. Sometimes a child would name several authors. A number of authors were named on each occasion. The numbers of these are given in Table 47 and the lists of writers can be seen in Appendix 5. As will be seen from the table the number of writers mentioned fluctuates, and there is no particular significance in the number mentioned on any given occasion. The children mentioned both writers for children and writers for adults on each occasion, with more children's writers than adult writers for the first three occasions, and more adult writers for children on the last three occasions. The table gives a comparison of the number of writers for children and the number of writers for adults in terms of percentages on each of the six occasions.

TABLE 47. Numbers of writers mentioned on each occasion of the survey.

	Total No. of Children's writers Adult writers mentioned.	% Children's Authors	% Adult Authors
Feb. 1976	13	84.51%	15.39%
June, 1976	30	79.66%	20.33%
Feb. 1977	14	57.2%	42.8%
June, 1977	17	35.29%	64.71%
Feb. 1978	11	27.27%	72.73%
June, 1978	21	28.57%	71.43%

It must be remembered that these figures only apply to writers specifically named as favourites. In the book lists the number of writers for adults listed grows gradually through the survey. Some children by the end of the third year were reading only books for adults. As seen from the table only 13 authors were mentioned as favourites in February 1976. Names in the list were little changed from that of six months before. Enid Blyton still headed the list, mentioned 10 times, Michael Bond was still in second place, mentioned 3 times with many of the same names appearing on the list as in 1975. C.S. Lewis, W.E. Johns, Noel Steatfield, Nina Bawden, Joan Aiken, Ursula le Guin, Alfred Hitchcock and Richard Adams were all mentioned again. Some children had not changed their tastes at all, keeping their allegiance to old favourites.

Of the 10 children who still named Enid Blyton, some of them were children with low scores on the Schonell Test in 1975, some were children in the category of light readers, listing only 1 or 2 books.

The Schools Council Report (Whitehead, 1977) had commented on the overwhelming predominance of Enid Blyton on the lists of favourite authors, particularly among the girls. In the School Council Survey 1604 children had named Blyton as a favourite writer (Table 81 - Children and their Books, 1977) and Table 80 (named favourite writers as a percentage of all children in each age and sex grouping) shows that Enid Blyton

was mentioned most by both boys and girls in each age group of 10+, 12+ and 14+ with percentages as follows.

10+	Boys	Girls	12+	Boys	Girls	14+	Boys	Girls
	19.5	50.1		10.3	31.2		3.1	9.0

Frank Whitehead(1977) comments that popularity of Enid Blyton's books "is only partially explained by the fact that they are easy to read, simple and straight forward in their language and relatively short", and quotes some of the remarks children made about their liking for Blyton. The same attitude, as described by Whitehead, prevailed in this study among the children at 10+ and at 11+. Some of the reasons for the higher proportion of Blyton listings emerge from the case studies, as they do also in the Chapter on Follow-up interviews in the Schools Council report. Children can buy her books in paperback in every local bookshop, or corner newsagent. Children buy her books and exchange them with friends. They re-read them as old favourites even after they have progressed to other kinds of reading. One can only agree with Frank Whitehead that there "is no great harm in Enid Blyton" and that children who widen their reading horizons pass through a "Blyton" stage and then move on to other books and authors. As already noted, Enid Blyton was the favourite writer mentioned most at 10+ in the pilot study, where 37 children out of 120 named Blyton. She was also the favourite writer in the list named by the 40 children in the sample, where 9 children listed Blyton.

For the first year of the survey 1976 (11+) Enid Blyton was still the most popular writer among the 40 children. In February she is mentioned 10 times and in June, 8 times. After 1976 this is no longer the case. In 1977 two children listed Enid Blyton in February, one child, in June. In 1978 no child listed her as a favourite writer in February, and one child in June.

From a study of these 40 children, her popularity was evident among the 10+ and the 11+ age groups.

The children who continued to read Blyton after the 1st year of the survey seemed to be either children of low ability, or children who were not interested in reading fiction books. Children who read widely and listed new authors still occasionally re-read their favourite Blyton stories.

The author in second place in the lists of favourite writers in June 1975, and again in February and June 1976, was Michael Bond. His name does not appear again on the lists of favourite writers after 1976, but some of his books are listed as re-reading in 1977. Some of the reasons given by the children for their liking of Bond were that the stories were short, easy to read and that they were "funny". Children like humourous books, as was noted in the pilot study in 1975 (Appendix 1.5) and there are too few of them available. Those the children find are read and re-read, and this may be one explanation of the re-reading of Michael Bond well into secondary school.

Other writers on the list in February 1976 were mentioned only once or twice. A lot more authors were mentioned in June 1976 than in February, 30 as compared with 13. Almost 80% of these were still writers for children, with a slight increase in the number of adult writers (20%). Boys who were listing most fiction still preferred adventure stories. Adult writers added to their lists included Desmond Bagley, Alistair Maclean and Ian Fleming. Girls who listed large numbers of fiction books mentioned a number of adult writers, including Jane Austen, Charlotte Bronte and John Wyndham.

In 1977, less children named favourite writers, and no writer was mentioned more than three times (C.S. Lewis). Enid Blyton was mentioned by 2 children in February and one child in June. Noel Streatfield was listed twice on each occasion. All the other writers were mentioned once only and by the end of this year the children were listing more adult writers than writers for children. In 1978 over 70% of the writers mentioned as favourites were adult writers on both occasions. This gradual swing from children's books to adult books is best illustrated in Case Study 1, an account of the reading of the child who read most during the survey.

In July 1978 Noel Streatfield was mentioned by three girls. Three authors were mentioned twice, Desmond Bagley and Alistair Maclean by boys and Agatha Christie by girls. The rest of the authors on the list were mentioned once only. Lists of all the writers mentioned as favourites on each occasion can be seen in Appendix 5.

(viii) The reading of children's books

As already mentioned in the section on favourite writers, the children moved gradually over the three year period from reading children's books to reading adult books. Although there are many differences in reading tastes, and many of these can be read in the case studies in Chapter 9, some general observations can be made.

Re-reading

The first observation is on the re-reading of favourite books. Often these were books mentioned on reading lists at the top of the Junior School. A lot of the titles re-read were by the two favourite authors, Enid Blyton and Michael Bond, on the first year of the survey. Of the Blyton books the favourite series was the Famous Five. Girls also liked the school stories about St. Clares, and about the Naughtiest Girl in the School. Boys liked the mystery series. Prolific readers, who listed a lot of books, had given up reading Blyton by the age of 12 years. The children who continued to read her books were often weaker readers who sought the security of books they knew, or reluctant readers who read books they owned rather than search for new ones. Other books re-read in the first year were also old favourites from Junior School days like The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis, and The Ghost of Thomas Kempe by Penelope Lively. Certain individuals had favourite books they re-read more than once. For instance, one girl re-read several times The Secret Garden and A Little Princess by Frances Hodgson Burnett, and another girl re-read A Wizard of Earthsea by Ursula Le Guin three times.

Associated with the re-reading of children's books, an interesting factor emerged in the longitudinal study. This was the fact that the children listed more books re-read in June than in February each year. Some children said this was because they had been working for school examinations. They liked to re-read books they had at home, as light relief from revision. Also they had no time to visit the library. This was true for 'heavy' readers. Two examples may be given of girls who stated these reasons in June 1976. One 'heavy' reader in the single-sex school listed 22 books, 8 of them re-reading. Another 'light' reader in the mixed comprehensive school listed 3 books, 2 of them re-reading. In the first year of the survey, when the children

listed most books, and also most children's books, there were 42 books out of 262 books re-read in February (16%) and 72 books out of 192 books re-read in June (37%). (For a good example of the re-reading of one 'heavy' reader see Case Study 1).

Easy reading.

A second factor sometimes, but not always, associated with re-reading, is the reading of easy books, well below the ability level of the reader. Among such books are listed Winnie the Pooh, My Naughty Little Sister and Bobby Brewster books. Sometimes interviewees said they had read the books to younger siblings. (Example Case Study 1).

Interests

Many children read books associated with their interests, but rarely restricted their reading only to their main interest. This happened occasionally. One girl, who spent a lot of her leisure time with horses, listed only Black Beauty, Misty, Thunderbird and My Friend Flicka. Whereas a boy, who mainly listed books associated with his interests of History, Geography and languages, also occasionally listed novels and books on sport.

Girls' preferences

Girls who were avid readers usually read a lot of children's books. These readers tended to read right through all the books of a favourite writer, or writers. This was the case for the four girls who listed most books throughout the survey.* Two of the girls were in School 2 and two in School 3. In the first year of the survey they shared a liking for certain authors, some they had started reading in junior school. They like fantasy stories, historical novels and science-fiction more than contemporary adventure stories. Well known children's writers of the last quarter of a century figured largely in their lists, which included Richard Adams, Nina Bawden, Lucy Boston, Roy Brown, Helen Cresswell, Nicholas Fisk, Alan Garner, Leon Garfield, Ursula Le Guin, Penelope Lively, C.S. Lewis, Catherine Storr, Ivan Southall and Rosemary Sutcliff.

* The four girls are ID numbers 1,3,7 and 10 (Table 11.)
(Their total listings are 182, 119, 74 and 109 books).

After the first year of the survey tastes diverged, especially as they began to add adult titles to their own lists. One girl developed an interest in mythology, she read a lot of Greek and Roman myths, and especially enjoyed The God Beneath the Sea by Leon Garfield and Edward Blishen. She later went on to read all the Claudius books by Robert Graves. Another girl became most interested in Science-Fiction, and contemporary novels. In 1977 she read all Peter Dickinson's novels for children, and several books by Ivan Southall, and was looking for more Science-Fiction, for children or adults. The third girl liked stories with historical interest, or mystery or ghost stories. She read all Penelope Lively's books in 1976. In 1977 she listed several books by Charles Dickens and by Rosemary Sutcliff, and experimented with several different authors all new to her. By 1978 she was listing a lot of adult fiction. The fourth girl continued to read children's books to the end of the survey and listed few adult novels. In 1976 and 1977 her favourite authors were Noel Streatfield, Frances Hodgson Burnett, Penelope Lively, Patricia Lynch, Joan Aiken and Laura Ingalls Wilder. Her favourite books were the Gemma books by Noel Streatfield, and The Wolves of Willoughby Chase series by Joan Aiken. In 1978 she discovered Alan Garner and Penelope Farmer for the first time, and was still thoroughly enjoying children's books at the end of the survey, with little interest in adult fiction.

For readers like these four, finding new books and new authors presented no problem. However they comprised only 20% of the girls in the sample. For the rest of the girls reading was not a main interest. The well-known children's writers, mentioned in connection with the four readers above, are hardly listed by the rest of the sample, except for an occasional title (Examples: Watership Down by Richard Adams, The Secret Passage by Nina Bawden).

In children's books the preferences of the majority of the girls, as reflected in their listings, are to some extent generalisable, and may be summarised briefly.

- (1) Enid Blyton's stories, especially the Famous Five Series and some of the school stories.

Examples: Five Have Plenty of Fun
Five go off to Camp
First Term at St. Clares

- (2) Favourite "classics", often associated with films or television series.

Examples: Black Beauty
Mary Poppins
The Secret Garden

- (3) Easy reading, usually of books available in the home.

Examples: Winnie the Pooh
Paddington Helps Out
William in Trouble

- (4) Humorous books, mostly books owned by the children often re-readings.

Examples: Charlie and the Chocolate Factory
James and the Giant Peach
Freaky Friday

Some girls did not look for new children's books to read once they had left the primary school. Several of them read a lot of teenage magazines and women's magazines, and at the age of 12 or 13 years developed interests either in romantic writers, (examples, Catherine Cookson and Pamela Matthews) or in contemporary fiction associated with films or television programmes (examples, The Professionals, 79 Park Avenue). A few girls were interested in Science-Fiction, one girl started to read different adult science-fiction writers after reading two children's books, 2 for Zachariah and The Silver Crown by Robert C. O'Brian.

For detailed examples of individual children's reading the reader is referred to the case studies in Chapter Nine.

Boys' preferences.

One fact which was clear from a study of the titles listed by the children was that the boys gave up reading children's books much earlier than the girls did.

Boys who read a lot of fiction enjoyed adventure stories and listed children's books like the Biggles series by W.E. Johns, or the adventure series by Willard Price. Like the avid girl readers, they tended to read through all the books by a favourite author. The best example of this is seen in Case Studies 31 and 32, of the twin boys who, exhausting W.E. Johns in the first year of the survey, found little to

interest them in children's books and went on to read adult thrillers.

As was noted for the girls, several boys went on listing Enid Blyton books in the first year of the survey, and a few boys went on reading easier books for some time after starting secondary school.

Of the 20 boys in the sample, 12 of them listed non-fiction on almost every occasion. Five of them read overall more non-fiction than fiction, only occasionally listing a novel.

The majority of the boys gave up reading children's books after the Junior School, and listed only adult fiction. Often their choice of books was influenced either by friends, or by the media, or both.

(ix) The reading of adult fiction

The gradual move from children's books to adult fiction was apparent with each successive six-monthly meeting with the children. More and more adult books appeared in the book lists, and more adult authors were mentioned as favourite writers as the survey progressed (see Table 47). Sometimes the choice of adult novel was due to the influence of a friend or a member of the family, sometimes to the influence of the media. Sometimes the choice of book was a random one from the library. The listing of books was so diverse that the majority of titles were listed once only. Where a book was mentioned several times it was usually due to more than one influence at work, as in the case of Jaws, already mentioned. Another feature which emerges from the case studies and the interviews with the children, which may not have been uncovered in a purely survey approach, is the children's desire to explore the unknown, the macabre and the unpleasant. This has already been mentioned briefly in the reference to the books associated with the films, Jaws, the Omen and The Exorcist.

It also occurs in the other books. One example is seen in the writings of James Herbert. Children who discovered books like The Rats, The Fog and The Survivors, talked about them to friends and they were then listed by other children. In 1977 The Rats, with its detailed descriptions of people devoured alive by giant rats, in a variety of circumstances from deserted houses to crowded underground trains, seemed to be a popular book at 13+, especially among the boys. Sometimes these were the same children, who had listed Jaws as the best book they had ever read, and

found the opening chapters with the descriptions of the ravages of the man-eating shark, the most exciting in the book. Similarly, in 1978, several of the children read Rabid, the story of a man who brought a rabid dog into the country, and subsequently suffered an extremely unpleasant and gory end, after observing the equally unsavoury deaths of a number of other people. One boy wrote of the book "I like books which leave your spine tingling and guts aching, like Rabid, it mentions things like the rotting gut was hanging over the loose intestine. They are books which I really enjoy."

This kind of response was usually from boys rather than girls, though several of the girls read Rabid and Jaws.

Among some of the boys there was a growing taste for thrillers, apparent in the listing of books by Ian Fleming, Alistair Maclean and Desmond Bagley. Amongst some of the girls there was a new interest in love stories. One girl was reading through the best-selling historical romances of Pamela Matthews and had listed Love's Wildest Promise and Love's Avenging Heart as some of the best books she had ever read. She explained that the books were being passed around among her group of friends and she was waiting for the next book to be passed to her from her friend's sister. "Everybody wants them, so its first come first served", she said. (Case Study 9).

Other individual tastes included horror stories, ghost stories, crime, science-fiction, historical romance, mythology and travel. The range of reading was so diverse that it would be impossible to categorise it in any way for such a small sample. For different kinds of reading in progress by different children the case studies in Chapter Nine provide a range of examples for the reader of this study.

The list of books which were mentioned by the children in June 1978 as outstanding books gives some indication of the diversity of the children's tastes and interests. Sixteen out of twenty girls, and fifteen out of twenty boys named an outstanding book.

Outstanding Books named by Girls in June, 1978

I, Claudius
Claudius the God
Watership Down
The Omen
Audrey Rose
Campion Towers
Psi-Hi
Little House on the Prairie
Rabid
The Little Witch
A Pair of Jesus Boots *
Ben Hur
America (by Alistair Cook)
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory
The Professionals
My Family and Other Animals
The Autumn People

Great Expectations
Rose Red
Gone with the Wind
Love Story
Love's Wildest Promise
Love's Avenging Heart
The Hiding Place
All the Gemma Books
Joan Aiken's Black Hearts in Battersea series
The Outsiders *

* read in school

Outstanding books named by Boys in June 1978

Casino Royale
Tightrope Men
Running Blind
Born Free *
The Eagle has Landed
A Bridge Too Far
The Fog
The Chrysalids
The Mystery of the Talking Skull
To Kill a Mocking Bird *
The Sweeney
Cry the Beloved Country
Exodus
For Whom the Bell Tolls
Mila 18
Rabid
Jaws
Charlie
White Fang *
Dr. No
Anna
The Stud

* read in school

(x) Books read in English lessons

The questionnaire, which the children completed twice yearly, asked the children not to list books read in English lessons. It was designed to find out what the children chose to read in their leisure time. However, the school may influence that choice, and school is a much greater influence for some children than for others. During interviews the children discussed all aspects of their reading, including books they had enjoyed reading in school. One impression gained by the researcher was of the dichotomy existing between what the children said and what appeared to be happening. The children tended to be extremely critical of the books chosen for them by the English teachers, and to complain that they were not given books suitable for their age and interests. Yet in each year large numbers of books were mentioned covering a wide range of likes and interests.

In the first year 31 books were named. Three of these, The Silver Sword, Elidor and Magnolia Buildings were mentioned by nine different children. In the second year 37 books were named, those mentioned most being A Pair of Jesus Boots, (11 children), and I Am David and Carrie's War (8 children each). In the third year 20 books were named with Joby and Walkabout mentioned most, (5 children each). The full lists are given in Appendix 6.

As indicated, some of the books were used in more than one school.

The children had a lot to say about the books they were given to read in English lessons. Much of this was constructive criticism, and many of the points were made by children in all five schools. A lot of the children would have liked more choice, more variety, and more opportunity to be given a say in which books they studied. Several children expressed a dislike of the system of the whole class studying one book.

"The whole class has got to have the same book - she just gives us any old book", said one child.

There was criticism of the teacher's choice of books and of the fact that teachers did not make an effort to find out what the children liked to read. Whereas some children merely said that the books were boring, others were willing to discuss reasons why they found the books unsuit-

able. Some children were scathing about the books offered to them.

"They're only Junior books ... things like that ... some I've read in junior school".

"The books that we read in English lessons aren't very good. A couple of books have just been everyday happenings".

"They don't really give us things that appeal to us. Everybody has different tastes. I find it difficult to describe what I like. They could try and find out what we like. In the first year we had awful books, A Hundred Million Francs - that was stupid".

However, when they were offered a book they liked they were enthusiastic about it with remarks like -

"It was the only good one". (Cider with Rosie)

"I liked that most". (Day of the Triffids)

"I really liked that". (Of Mice and Men)

"I think it's the best book I've read in an English lesson. (2 for Zachariah)

In the third year less titles were mentioned and it seemed that the children read less books in English lessons. More time was spent in reading plays, and in doing work from course books. The majority of the children said they were reading less books in school in the third year.

"We haven't been reading one for quite a long time".

"We haven't got any books".

and (probably exaggerated)

"We had good books in the second year. Walkabout - that was a good one. It's so long ago, I can't remember. It must be a year and a half ago since we read one".

and (a reflection on the limitations of the stock available in the English cupboard)

"The teacher had meant to get a set of What Happened to a Vet, or something like that, but another teacher had taken it for another class".

Some children mentioned suggestions on the reorganisation of English lessons.

"If you've got a reading lesson you should go to the library and then you can choose what book you like and you can read that yourself instead of having to read one in a great big group, which you don't like".

"It might be more interesting if half the class read one book and half read another book".

As factors influencing their reading, various children mentioned at different times the use of class libraries, the use of the school library, encouragement from the English teacher, the class teacher, or the Head of Year, enjoyment of English lessons, writing reviews for the English teacher and suggestions for reading from the English teacher.

Although the children tended to criticise the teacher's choice of books,, despite what the children said, there was evidence in several of the case studies, that the children were influenced by the books they read in the English lessons. This was particularly true, in cases where there were few or no books in the home. Perhaps the best example in the study is that of Della (Case Study 20), whose only contact with books was through the school. Evidence from some of the case studies suggests that the attitude and approach of the English teacher may be a crucial factor in determining the amount and choice of a child's voluntary reading.

Views of the children

The children in the sample at different times expressed a wide range of views on reading. By the end of the survey they were used to the idea of talking about reading, and perhaps had had more opportunity to develop their own views and to express them than any group of children approached at random. In June 1975, the researcher spent more time with the children than on previous occasions and collected their views in two ways not used previously. As well as being interviewed individually the children were also interviewed in groups. In addition, after completing the questionnaire, each child was asked to write something about reading. The written comments and the group interviews produced a wide range of comments and opinions. In many of them the children's statements reinforce some of the findings and suggestions made earlier in this report.

In group discussion most children thought that nowadays people read less because of the time taken up watching films and television.

"I think there's more entertainment now than there used to be - in the form of the cinema and television. There's a lot more entertainment other than... outside reading books", said one boy.

A lot of children thought that they were not encouraged to read as they grew older. They felt they were treated differently in the secondary school. One boy said,

"In junior schools the teachers encourage you to read books - like Wide Range and all that - they used to encourage me to read books, but when I came to this school I was treated in a more adult manner and then I wasn't encouraged".....

Many children, it seemed, would have welcomed more adult interest in what they read, and more guidance in choosing books. One child said,

"I think you have to be encouraged by people talking to you before you read a book like that, because I don't think you can look at a piece of paper and say, oh this book's down 'ere. I think I should read that. I think you've gotta hear people talking about it and saying, 'I thought that was a good book to read'. I think you have to be encouraged by people".

In the group discussions there was also the feeling that reading was 'a good thing', that everyone should be able to read, and that reading helped one's written work. One group had a long discussion on this point.

"If you've got fairly good English", said one boy, "well if you don't choose to read books well that's up to you. But obviously it's going to be a help to you, 'cos you can learn more expressions, words you won't notice it when you're reading but I found after reading a few books you tend to be able to put more lively stories, perhaps even based on the books you've read".

"I don't agree with that", another boy countered

"It must be," was the reply. "It must be that, because you started reading, when you first started you didn't have any vocabulary. As you start reading you learn more words, more expressions. As you go on you can keep on learning, I mean, there's no end".

Another child supported this-

"Yeah, I go along with Christopher. You get more imagination, more stories".

The written pieces varied in length from one sentence to a full page of comments. The diversity of views presented reflected the wide range of interests and ability in this small sample of children. The range can be seen in Chapter 9.

The written comments are too lengthy to include them all in the report, but it may be appropriate to end the chapter with some diverse comments from the children.

- I like reading because it gives me something to do.
- I wouldn't like to read too often otherwhys I would get sick of it.
- I like reading because it is fun and you can learn from it.
- Reading often brings out the me in me.
- People should read at least one book over a number of weeks as it is a very good form of relaxation and gets the mind at ease.
- I like reading because a book is really a companion when you are lonely or bored.
- I like to buy my own books so that if the get torn or tatty I wouldn't mind.
- Reading for pleasure is I think very important.
I like reading during the eyenings when I have finished everything else and it is very enjoyable.
- I will only read a book if I need to find out a thing or only if it is a book that interests me, otherwise I don't bother.
- I don't think ~~that~~ people should be forced to read books because as everyone has different tastes it is very difficult to find a book which suits everyones tastes.

CHAPTER NINE

AN EXAMINATION OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF READERS, WITH REFERENCE TO SPECIFIC CASE STUDIES TO ILLUSTRATE EACH TYPE.

In this longitudinal study, the researcher has used two approaches, a survey approach and a case study approach, so that each might complement the other, and, as suggested in Chapter 4, provide macro and micro approaches to the study.

During the three year period of the survey, information was collected by a variety of techniques. These included interviews, questionnaires and standardised tests. As the survey progressed, it was possible to cross-check findings from one interview to another, and to compare information obtained in interviews with that obtained from questionnaires.

The strengths and weaknesses of both the survey and the case study approaches have been discussed in Chapter 4. Generally a strength of the survey approach is that it does lead to generalisable findings. A weakness of the case study approach is the fact that results are not easily generalisable.

Due to the unique character of this sample none of the findings of the survey would be generalisable to the whole of the population, but within the sample some generalisation can be made, and these used to complement the specific case studies. Statistically from the findings of the questionnaire, the sample can be divided into categories of readers, on the number of books they listed, of non readers, light readers, moderate readers and heavy readers. However, in a case study approach it is difficult to fit a case to a category. There are almost as many kinds of readers as there are individuals. Thus, the four general categories have been taken and sub categories suggested within them, with examples to illustrate different types of readers.

When considering individuals, each case study looks at a single instance and, as Nisbet and Watt suggest, "aims to identify the unique features of interaction within that instance" (Nisbet and Watt 1978).

Also, in writing the individual case studies, the researcher has been concerned with an examination of the reasons for the amount of a child's voluntary reading, and for the development of his reading interests.

L.R. Gay states that "The primary purpose of a case study is to determine the factors, and relationship among the factors, which have resulted in the current behaviour or status of the subject of the study. In other words, the purpose of a case study is to determine why, not just what". (Gay 1976)

It seems that the two approaches may complement each other in various ways. An examination of several case studies may identify patterns which might not be discernible in a wholly statistical approach. Evidence collected in a survey approach, such as the scores on standardised tests, or the statistics obtained from analysis of questionnaires, may be used to provide background information for each individual child, and may also provide suggestions for the interpretation of similar cases.

Another weakness of the case study approach is what Gay calls "observer bias" (Gay 1976) and Nisbet and Watt label the "selectivity" of the researcher, which they say "tends to be personal and subjective". (Nisbet and Watt 1978).

In a longitudinal survey over three years the researcher was aware of this possibility. Having met the children several times in 1975 in their junior school, at the stage of the pilot study, she then met them twice yearly in 1976, 1977 and 1978. Thus the children were interviewed seven times in all. On each occasion the children talked to the researcher about their reading interests and other interests, and discussed the books they had listed. On the first occasion of the survey (February 1976) some of the children were ill at ease and some of the answers were stilted and monosyllabic. At first the researcher tried to follow a set pattern of questions, but found that this was too restricting. Nisbet and Watt agree that the type of interview schedule used in large surveys are not suitable for a case study approach which can use a much more loosely structured interview which allows each person to respond in his own way. They suggest that the

interviewer "let the respondent set the pace and choose the direction of the interview" (Nisbet and Watt, 1978). It was found that a loosely structured interview was a suitable approach to use, and as the three years of the survey progressed the children responded to this method, and were willing to talk about their reading experiences in and out of school. The researcher either made notes during the interviews, or taped them, sometimes using one method and sometimes the other. It was found that each method had advantages and disadvantages. With the use of a tape recorder some children were self-conscious and therefore less likely to talk easily, but a permanent record of the interview was obtained. Some children talked more when there was no tape recorder present and the researcher was able to make notes of major issues, and also to note the exact words of key sentences, which might be useful in writing the case studies, but the total view of the interview was not preserved in the same way as with a recording.

The researcher was aware of the fact that it was necessary to put the children at their ease, as they were more willing to talk in a relaxed atmosphere. After the first year, an opening greeting with a reference to a previous interview, or reminder of an earlier discussion, was usually effective in putting most children at ease at the beginning of an interview.

In recent years research has begun to focus more on the factors influencing the interviewing situation, and in particular on the questions used by the interviewer to obtain certain responses from the interviewees. While the researcher used her own lists of questions within a loosely structured framework, throughout the survey, she did not attempt any detailed analysis of questions and answers.

The researcher felt that she knew the children well after a period of more than three years, and that some children were more willing than others to talk easily and at length. With the realisation that there is a danger that the writer of research studies of this kind may be subject to 'observer bias', the case studies are presented with, it is hoped, a minimum of subjectivity.

In the following pages different types of readers are presented in various categories and sub-categories, with one or more case studies to illustrate each type of reader discussed. In the longitudinal study some readers cannot be placed in one category because of the change in their reading patterns over three years. For instance, one girl might be termed a 'heavy' reader in 1976, a 'moderate' reader in 1977 and a 'light' reader in 1978. Her pattern provides a good example of a case which showed a decline in the number of books listed. (Case Study 2). On the other hand some children listed books consistently in one category, like the boy who listed either 1 or 2 books on each occasion (Case Study 25).

As it was intended to look closely at the twins in the sample, all 8 twins are given as examples of case studies within the categories which follow. For each pair of twins, as they have the same family background and influences, other factors, especially the major ones of sex, social class and ability may be considered in more detail. A short note on the 4 pairs of twins is given at the end of this chapter.

Different types of readers

1. The non-reader

The non-reader is, in the opinion of the researcher, a rarity. Almost all children want to read something. There are few exceptions in this survey. Statistics may indicate a large proportion of non-readers in a sample, based on the number of books listed by the children. This longitudinal survey finds some non-readers on five out of six occasions, based on the number of books listed, and in the last year of the survey, 25% non-reading children in February and 20% in July 1978. The Schools Council report (Whitehead 1977) finds 36% of non-readers at 14+. However, statistics are only an indication of the number of books listed by the children, and not an indication of the amount of reading of all kinds that they undertake. It is necessary to ask what constitutes reading? Is the individual who reads a daily newspaper from cover to cover, and reads weekly journals and magazines, a non-reader?

In search for the non-reading child the case study approach is more likely to find answers to these questions than the survey approach.

Among the forty children in this sample, examining all aspects of their reading over a period of three years, the researcher found one child who might be described as a non-reading child. If only one child in forty (2.5% of the sample) is a non-reader, perhaps some views of children as readers, or non-readers, may be revised.

There are some children who read nothing, have no desire to read, and perceive no reason why they should read. One such child is Luke. (Case Study 33).

He reads no books, comics or periodicals, and only occasionally picked up a newspaper. In the three years of the survey he only finished one book.

There were other children who listed no books by the end of the survey. In fact, 10 children listed no books in February 1978 and 8 children listed no books in July 1978. However, most of these children were not unwilling readers, whereas Luke had no desire to read anything for any purpose, and seemed to see no reason why he should read.

Case Study

Luke

Case Study 33

Luke attended the mixed comprehensive school. In June 1975 he listed 5 books read in school and 5 books read out of school. He had no favourite author. Of the books he listed he named his favourite as The Battle of Saint Street. He did not belong to a public library. He said he owned seven books. He had one younger brother. No one at home influenced his reading. His main interests were football and athletics. He had joined an Athletics Club.

Luke was a child who was never interested in reading. He was always polite at interviews, but never showed the slightest enthusiasm for any of the books he read in school or out. Of the six occasions of the survey he listed no books each February, and one book each June.

In June 1976 he saw the film Jaws and borrowed the book from a friend. This was the only book he read and finished in three years of the survey. A lot of the children listed Jaws on this occasion, because they wanted to read it after seeing the film, and it was the book listed most in 1976. In English lessons in 1976 Luke read Elidor, Magnolia Buildings and The Silver Sword.

In 1977 the one book listed in July was borrowed from a friend and left unfinished because he did not like it. In English lessons he had read, in 1977, I am David and A Pair of Jesus Boots. Asked if he liked either, he replied, "Not really".

The last book he listed, in July 1978, was once again borrowed from a friend, and was a book a lot of boys listed in 1978, The Fog by James Herbert. He did not finish it.

Luke listed two magazines in February 1976, Motor Cyclist and Power Boats. He never listed any on subsequent occasions. He always filled in the questionnaire carefully and neatly, answering most of the questions the same on each occasion. He said that he watched television for 3 hours a day. He never borrowed books from the library. He never read non-fiction. On Question 18 (How many books of all kinds do you usually read in a month?) he ticked 1-2. On Question 12 (Do you own any books yourself?) he consistently ticked 'up to 10' until the last occasion when he answered 'None'.

In 1976 he occasionally read The Daily Mirror and the News of the World. After 1976 he listed no newspapers read, although when asked he said he read one occasionally.

By the end of the survey, he could be regarded as a non-reader. He had listed no books finished since July 1976, had read no magazines or comics. There seemed to be a total lack of interest or motivation to read. The reasons for this are not clear. His scores on standardised tests indicate that he was not likely to find reading difficult. He scored 13.8 on the Schonell Test in 1975, 103 on the Widespan Test in 1976, and 104 in 1978. On the APU Vocabulary Test his percentile was 63. The only test where he had a low score (86) was the NFER Verbal Test. One reason for his lack of interest in reading may be that his love of Athletics and Football gave him little time to read. Another reason may be that he had no encouragement from an interested adult. No one at home read much. Luke expected to leave school at the age of 16, and help his father in the building trade. He did borrow books occasionally from a friend, but he rarely finished reading a book. In school he said he liked English lessons, and he usually remembered the titles of books he had read in English lessons.

It can therefore be suggested that the 3 main influences, contributing to the fact that Luke was a non-reader, was lack of encouragement and example at home, a variety of outside interests and television viewing.

2. The non-book reader

In the last year of the survey some children were listing no books read in the last month, in either February or June. The four children who listed no books in 1978 were all girls. One of these girls said that she did read books occasionally, and gave some examples, but had not read any in the previous month. She read the newspaper daily, and read women's magazines which her mother bought. The other three girls might be described as 'heavy' readers of teenage magazines, and of picture-strip love stories. Often they could not name the titles of the picture-strip books. One girl said she always read all the stories in the teenage magazines, and in the annuals of her favourite magazines. Another girl received a number of magazines free each week from a relative who worked "in a comic factory", and on one occasion listed 13 magazines read regularly. To read several of such magazines weekly amounts to at least an hour a day spent reading for some of these girls. One of them, Della, is described in detail, in Case Study 20.

Della

Case Study 20

In June 1975, Della, at the top of the top of the junior school, was just beginning to take an interest in reading. She scored 14.6 on the Schonell Word Recognition Test, and had no difficulty in coping with the language in the books offered to her in school. As she had a high reading age she was given the option, in a team teaching situation, of joining a group of children to study and discuss books.

She listed six books read in school and one book read out of school. At home she owned no books, and read no comics or newspapers. There were no books in the home. The only reading material ever to appear in the home was an occasional Greek Newspaper. Her Greek parents, both dressmakers, rarely read anything. She had one elder brother and two sisters, one older one younger than herself.

She named Alan Garner as her favourite author. Her class teacher had been reading The Weirdstone of Brisingamen aloud to the class and infected the children with some of his own enthusiasm.

She named A Little Princess and Fairy Tales of Greece as favourite books. She had tried a lot of the books discussed in the book group, including On the Run, and A Dog so Small.

Della attended the mixed comprehensive school (School 1).

She went on reading for six months or so, in her leisure time after starting secondary school. In February 1976 she listed 5 books and 2 comics read in the last month. She had used the school library and she was still interested in reading. She said she found it easier to read, and that she thought she was reading more than she had done in the junior school. This was the last occasion on which she showed any enthusiasm for reading books. In July 1976 she listed 3 books, of which 2 were unfinished. The third was My Naughty Little Sister which she took out from the public library to read to her eight year old sister. For the remaining two years of the survey, she listed one book in July 1977, and that was crossed as unfinished. It was a book on her sister's card from the library. "I don't like reading" she said. She had given up using the public library or school library for herself by then. While she listed no books, her comic and magazine reading increased.

In July 1976 she listed Mandy and Pink. By 1978 she was reading Oh Boy and Mates regularly, and some magazines "of love stories" but could not name the titles.

Her elder brother had started work by 1977 and was buying The Sun newspaper, the first reading material in English to be bought by a member of the family. "My brother buys The Sun every day, which I read after he has". Della said she read the inside articles and stories. In the interview in July 1976 she said her elder brother and sister read little and her brother had some books on electronics.

Her brother, the eldest child, read the Greek newspapers. The other three children, all girls, could speak and understand Greek, but not read it. For a time they had attended Greek classes on Saturday mornings and Wednesday evenings, but had given this up. Her brother was the one one of the four children to persevere enough to retain enough to read the language.

Della's only contact with books remained that of English lessons. On every occasion I met her she could tell me the titles of the books she had read in English lessons and discuss the one she had enjoyed. This was obviously an important influence.

In February 1976, she mentioned The Silver Sword and said it was the best book she had read in the last six months. By July she had read in school The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe, Run for your Life and Magnolia Buildings. In February 1977 she mentioned Carrie's War, and in July Devil-in-the-Fog and The Pit.

She had enjoyed The Pit most of books read that year. By February 1978 she had read Joby and The Diary of Anne Frank, preferring the latter. In June 1978 she was very enthusiastic about The Outsiders, read recently in English lessons. She listed it as an outstanding book she had read that year. "It's a gang story about two boys, like Teddy boys, or Greasers they call them."

Although she is not listing books in 1977 and 1978 it seems that she is not an unwilling reader. She enjoys the books offered to her in school. She reads the newspapers someone else provides and she reads teenage magazines.

She liked watching television and said that she watched for 2 hours a day and more at weekends. Her favourite viewing was a series which tell a story, such as Starsky and Hutch and Charlie's Angels.

Della might easily have continued her reading with more guidance and encouragement. She had liked reading in the Junior School and had the foundation and the ability to go on reading. Perhaps with more guidance and provision of a wide range of books for leisure time reading she would not have given up so easily.

It is evident that she would have needed help to do this. For while she had scored 14.6 on the Schonell Test in junior school, with her limited experience of English and the fact that Greek was spoken at home, she had low scores on other verbal tests.

It may be the fact that she was reading less over the years meant that she was missing a vital source of language experience, which may have contributed to reducing her scores on standardised tests requiring verbal ability. This is indicated by the fact that her score on the Widespan Reading Tests were reduced by 16 points, from 88 in 1976 to 72 in 1978. Also on the intelligence tests she scored 110 on the non-verbal test compared with 95 on the verbal test.

In July 1977 on the scale to measure attitude to reading she scored 45%, one of the lowest scores of the survey, and the lowest score for the girls.

By July 1978 she had given up reading books in her leisure time, listing no books in the last year of the survey.

By the end of the survey there seems to be a contradiction in what she is saying. While she writes "I don't like reading books. I wouldn't pick up a book and start reading it", she also says, "I don't mind reading books that are not true, or love stories".

When writing of books read in school, she says "In English lessons we have read books, especially the play books are good".

3. Light readers

The category of 'light' readers in the School Council Survey (Whitehead 1977) consisted of children who listed 1 or 2 books on the questionnaire in March 1971.

For the purpose of this longitudinal study, as the children listed books on 6 occasions, the researcher would apply this category not only to the children who listed 1 or 2 books on every occasion, but

also to the children who have an average number of 1 or 2 books for the 6 occasions. For the latter this means that a child might have listed no books on one occasion, or 4 or 5 books on another.

Within this category of light readers in this survey, there are both girls and boys from different social classes and with varying standards of ability and attainment, with children both with high scores and low scores on the standardised tests. For example, a 'light' reader may be a child with low scores on the standardised tests who reads slowly but is not an unwilling reader. On the other hand, a 'light' reader may be a child of high ability who has many other interests and only reads an occasional book. In this survey are found girls, with high scores on tests, who read an occasional adult novel, usually a substantial historical or contemporary romantic novel. Also in this category are boys who only list an occasional novel, or an occasional non-fiction title associated with a hobby. Often these light readers are also light readers of magazines. 'Light' readers are also influenced by friends, or by the media, or by both, in the choice of the one or two titles listed. In some cases the media was the only influence in the choice of fiction.

As an example of a 'light' reader, the case study presented is of Matthew. He was not an unwilling reader, but read slowly and listed 1 or 2 books and one comic on each occasion of the survey.

Matthew

Case Study 25

Matthew attended the mixed comprehensive school, which was not the link school. (School 4)

In June 1975 he scored 9.7 on the Schonell Test, and listed 4 books read in school and 5 books read out of school. He said he liked books about war, and had no favourite book or author. He was a member of the public library and sometimes bought books for himself.

Throughout the survey Matthew was a 'light' reader, listing either one book or two books on each occasion. He read some comics in the first part of the survey, and took Battle regularly. In 1976 his favourite reading was a Battle book of stories told in picture strip form.

He was not an unwilling reader, but he read slowly. On each occasion the researcher talked to Matthew, he had enjoyed a book he had read, and could always name books read in English lessons. In February 1976 he had read The Railway Children from the class library, and The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe in English lessons. In June he had read Mr. Corbett's Ghost by Leon Garfield and found it "exciting". He was in the middle of reading The Wooden Horse.

There is little change in the pattern. Developing a liking for ghost stories, Matthew listed two on each occasion in 1977. He bought the books from the school bookshop. In February he listed Haunted Houses and the 5th Armada Ghost Book. In June he listed Great British Ghosts and The Mystery of the Talking Skull. In English lessons he had enjoyed Walkabout and Born Free.

He watched over 3 hours television a day. This was consistent throughout the survey, as he always indicated 'three hours or more' on the questionnaire (Question 13). His other interests were A.T.C., Gymnastics Club and a Chess Club. He did not read many comics. He gave up reading Battle in 1977, and instead bought magazines with picture-strip stories about war.

In 1978 he listed one non-fiction book on each occasion, The Ghost Hunter's Hand Book in February, and Ghosts Go Haunting in June. In 1978 he mentioned no book read in English lessons.

Matthew found reading difficult. He had low scores on the Widespan Reading Test, 95 in 1976, and 98 in 1978. On the NFER Verbal Test he scored 94. On the APU Vocabulary Test his percentile was 32. However on the Non-Verbal Intelligence test he scored 108. He went on looking for books to read and showed an interest in reading. On the scale to measure attitude towards reading he scored 68. He spent pocket money on books and magazines. He remained a member of the public library and said that he enjoyed reading. It seems that he was a 'light' reader, rather than a moderate reader, because he read slowly within the limits of his ability.

4. Children who found reading difficult

Matthew's case study has shown that for some children of low ability (i.e. with low scores on the standardised tests) reading may still be a slow and difficult process in the secondary school. There are other similar cases in the study.

The researcher has suggested, in the opening paragraphs of this chapter, that one of the advantages of using both a survey and a case study approach is that the two approaches might complement each other and provide suggestions for the interpretation of similar cases. It can now be pointed out that there are similar features in several

of the case studies of children scoring low on the standardised tests. Often these children listed books in the 'light' or 'moderate' categories but, in fact, they read very little, because they found it difficult. There are two boys in School 1, with similar factors in their studies to those mentioned in Matthew's study. Also there were several girls of low ability, who had low listings and marked many of their titles as unfinished. Among these girls were other similar features. Most of them read a lot of teenage magazines. They listed books by Enid Blyton well into the second year of the survey, and these were often re-readings. Their choice of adult novels was influenced by friends or by the media.

An example of this kind of girl reader is Maureen.

Maureen

Case Study 4

Maureen attended the mixed comprehensive school. She is one of the twins and her brother Norman attended the same school, and is described in Case Study 23. In the junior school Maureen and Norman read some of the same books and had some favourites in common, but once at Secondary School their tastes diverged and they had very little reading interests in common, although there were occasional instances when Norman read a novel which Maureen had obtained.

In 1975, Maureen named Roald Dahl as her favourite author and listed 22 books read in school and 5 books read out of school.

During the three years of the survey although Maureen listed books on every occasion, in fact she read very little. This is seen by a close examination of the books she listed on each occasion.

In February 1976 she listed 4 books. One of these was the Bible. Three books were crossed unfinished, and the other was a re-reading of a book called Rainy Day Stories.

On the next occasion, June 1976, she listed 6 books. Four of these were unfinished, and the other two were Jackie Annual and "a Disneyland book, about Pluto, Mickey Mouse, etc."

In 1976 she listed five comics in February and two in June.

It seemed that she was not interested in reading, but it may have been that she found it too difficult. If she got a book from the library she soon gave up reading it if it was at all demanding (e.g. Peter Pan). At home the books she picked up and re-read were those she knew required little effort, such as a comic annual. Her scores on all standardised tests were low. She had scored 9.5 on the Schonell Test at the age of eleven and obviously needed help and encouragement to find books she could cope with.

When the children completed the scale to measure attitudes towards reading, in June 1977, Maureen scored 56, a low score on the scale. In February 1977, she listed 3 books, Little Women, borrowed from a friend, and two books of her own, The Railway Children and Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, the latter a re-reading of her favourite book of 1975.

In June she listed one non-fiction book, All About Fashion, and Gulliver's Travels, borrowed from the class library (an abridged version). The latter she took home due to the influence of a new English teacher, who encouraged the children to use the class library books. In English lessons in 1977, she read Walkabout, The Little Red Pony, Dragon in the Garden and Coco the Clown.

By 1978 Maureen had lost interest in children's books. She went on reading teenage magazines, listing My Guy, Blue Jeans and Pink as those read regularly. She was also dipping into her mother's magazines. She watched television about three hours a day, and she had developed an interest in ballroom dancing. The books she listed in 1978 were adult books either borrowed from a friend or bought in paperback. Some of these were associated either with seeing a film or watching a television programme.

In February 1978 she bought The Deep, and borrowed Jaws and The Forgotten Land from a friend. In June she bought Rabid and Shane and borrowed two books, Ghost Stories and Little House on the Prairie, from a friend. In the space provided on the questionnaire she wrote, "I like little house on the prairie because when the programme comes on I tell everyone what's going to happen. And I like ghost stories because it was scarie."

The three adult novels she bought in 1978 for herself, The Deep, Rabid and Shane, proved difficult reading for her. All are marked unfinished. Even when she wanted to read them, and was prepared to spend her pocket money to buy them, she was not able to cope with the level of reading. With a score on the Widespan Test of 88 in 1978 (7 marks less than 1976) this was not surprising. On the NFER Verbal Test she scored 93. On the APU Vocabulary Test her percentile was 23.

Nevertheless, she did not give up reading and was still willing to experiment and try new books. Children like Maureen are perhaps those who need most help from the school.

5. Reluctant readers with irregular patterns over the three years of the survey.

There were a few children in the sample who reported such different numbers of books on different occasions that the pattern of their reading over three years fluctuates to such an extent that they cannot be placed in any category. This fluctuating pattern, as has been noted in previous chapters, was a feature of the boys reading overall, and is to be seen in the patterns of reading for some individuals more than others. As instances of boy readers with irregular patterns in their

listing over three years the researcher has chosen two boys to present as case studies. These are Norman (Case Study 23) who on six occasions listed 0, 5, 0, 3, 2, 0 books, and Gary (Case Study 28) who listed 0, 0, 5, 13, 0, 1 books. As will be seen there are some differences and some similarities between the two cases. Both boys listed no books on 3 out of 6 occasions, but whereas in each year Norman read books occasionally, Gary was a non-book-reader in the first year of the survey and then listed books in the 'heavy' reader category in the second year.

Norman was the twin brother of Maureen described in Case Study 4, and Gary was the twin brother of Iris, described later in Case Study 9. In both cases the boys had no reading interests in common with their twin sisters after starting secondary schooling.

Norman

Case Study 23

Norman also attended school 4, the mixed comprehensive school. Before starting secondary school he listed some of the same books as his sister, and on occasions continued to borrow books which she brought into the house. In June 1975 he named Michael Bond as his favourite author, and Paddington at Large as his favourite book. He listed 5 books read in school and no books read out of school. During the survey his listings showed a fluctuating pattern.

On the first occasion of the survey, in February 1976, he listed no books. In June 1976 he listed 5 books. Four of these were non-fiction and marked as unfinished. Two were for a school project, one he had borrowed because the family were going on holiday to Malta, and one was a book about football. The one fiction book was a book of horror short stories, borrowed from his brother and again marked unfinished, because he did not read all the stories.

In February 1977 he listed no books, and in June the three books he started were all left unfinished. In February 1978, he read three newspapers regularly. They were The Sun, The Daily Mirror and The Sunday Mirror. He read "the sports page, the T.V. page, and the front page, and sometimes the stories inside". He also did a paper round and dipped into papers he delivered. In conversation the fact emerged that Norman read a lot more than revealed by his questionnaire answers. He had a lot of favourite school subjects and read a lot for homework. He often read his brother's books. His brother had a lot of horror books. Norman was an energetic child with a lot of hobbies. He named football, fishing and stamp collecting, but football was his one absorbing interest. He owned football books and often re-read

them. He said "I never read them all. I just read bits, like the bit about the World Cup being stolen and how they found it. I read all that then put it down".

On the occasions in February 1976 and 1977 when he listed no books he said he was too busy to read. It may be suggested that the time devoted to football in the winter months left him little time for reading, which was why he listed books in June but not in February. The other occasion on which he listed books, he borrowed Jaws and The Deep from his sister. She had borrowed one and bought the other, and they were also on her list in February 1978. Norman might not have bothered to look for these for himself had his sister not obtained them.

A glance at the number of books listed would suggest that Norman read very little, and less than his twin sister. He never listed any comics or magazines. He developed a lot of interests during the period of the survey. He spent a lot of time training for football and athletics, attending a club on Wednesdays. He played football for two teams, the school team and a Sunday team. In his spare time he helped his father with building jobs. He watched television for 2 or 3 hours a day. It seemed that he was not very interested in reading. On the attitude scale, in June 1977, he scored 49. Yet it appears that while he was not willing to make an effort to find books to read, he did not think of himself as an unwilling reader, he enjoyed reading books which someone else provided. Sometimes this was his sister, or his elder brother, or his English teacher.

He enjoyed books read in English lessons, especially Born Free and Walkabout. "I like it. It was very good", he said of the latter.

Gary

Case Study 28

In the junior school Gary scored 12.6 on the Schonell Test in June 1975 and listed 14 books read in school and 4 books out of school. He named Enid Blyton as his favourite author. He also read comics. He was a member of the public library and borrowed books from both the public library and the school library. Both his mother and his sister read books, and suggested books for him to read. The family took three daily newspapers, The Daily Express, The Daily Mirror, and The Times, and three Sunday papers, The Sunday Express, The News of the World and The Sunday Times.

Gary's twin sister, Iris, attended the girls' comprehensive school (3) and Gary attended School 5, the boys' comprehensive school.

In his first year Gary listed no books in February or June. It appeared that he had completely lost interest in reading books. In June he said that the only books he could remember reading in the year were some history books belonging to his sister. He said his favourite authors were Enid Blyton and A.A. Milne. He was reluctant to talk about reading. His class had a library

period every week. During this period he took a book from the shelf, looked at it for the lesson time, then put it back. He never borrowed a book. He stated firmly, but with slight embarrassment, that he had read no books that he could list on the questionnaire.

He read a lot of comics in 1976. He listed Beano, Dandy, Topper and Monster Fun, as ones he read regularly. He also did a paper round and dipped into other comics and magazines which he delivered.

In 1977 there was a remarkable change in Gary's reading habits. In February he listed 5 books and 4 comics or magazines. He had read 3 novels borrowed from the public library, and two books on motor cycling, one from the library and one he had bought. He had also started reading all the newspapers taken by members of his family, and listed the Sunday Times Magazine, as one of his magazines. The reason for the increase in his reading was not clear. He said he now visited the library because he liked to borrow records, and that he used the school library more than he had done in 1976. In June he listed 13 books, 7 fiction and 6 non-fiction. These were from various sources. Three were from the public library which he visited frequently. Three were from the school library (the only occasion in three years on which Gary borrowed books from the school). He borrowed two books from a friend, one from a member of his family, and read two of his own books. He also read 2 books from the class library, The Gun and White Fang. He entered these on the questionnaire with a liking scale of 'one of the best books I have ever read'.

So marked was the change in Gary's tone of voice and the enthusiasm with which he talked about books, that the researcher was not surprised to discover that he had scored 69 on the attitude scale, which the children completed on this occasion. In interview he talked enthusiastically about borrowing books from family, friends and school. His English teacher encouraged the children to take books from the class library. "And we don't have to write about those," Gary said. He also said, "If I see a good book I like to read it." He said reading was enjoyable and "you learn more things."

It seemed that the remarkable transition from listing no books in 1976 to listing 5 and 13 books on the 2 occasions in 1977 was due to the influence of the school (particularly the English teacher), and to friends at school.

In 1978 Gary listed no books in February and one in June. He went on reading newspapers and magazines, particularly those on motor cycles. In September 1977 he had transferred from the lower school to the upper school, on another site. He gave up borrowing books from the school library or the public library. He said he had enjoyed reading Henry V and Animal Farm in English lessons. He did not think of himself as an individual who had given up reading. He said he had not had time to read, giving various reasons. Sports, Scout Shows, school examinations had all taken up a lot of his time. Television viewing, about two hours a day, remained the same throughout the survey.

The one book listed in 1978 was called Kart Design and Construction

The five magazines listed in June 1978 were Custom Car, Chopper, Beano, Bike and Karting.

Although he had listed one book only in 1978 it seems that he was not an unwilling reader. He was spending time reading, but reading newspapers, comics and magazines about his interests. For the time being (perhaps temporarily) he was not reading books and had listed no fiction books that year. It is difficult to say how far this was due to a transfer to another site. He no longer had a weekly library period in which he was encouraged to borrow books. He lost the influence of the English teacher who, in the second year, had urged the children to use the class library. It may be suggested that Gary is another child who is not willing to look for books himself, but will read them if they come his way, or are presented to him.

6. Readers decreasing from 'heavy' to 'light' categories in the course of the survey.

Another pattern observed in the survey is one of a gradual decline. The decrease in the amount of reading for the whole sample has been discussed in previous chapters. For some children this decrease in the number of books listed is clearly marked.

Some children list books in the 'heavy' category in February 1976, then gradually list less books each year, becoming 'light' readers by the end of the survey. The case studies of two children, one boy and one girl, are presented as examples to illustrate this decrease. The two examples have been chosen because they are the most marked for each sex. The numbers of books listed by each are as follows.

Case Study 2 (Carol)	11.	12.	4.	3.	2.	2.
Case Study 22 (Jeremy)	7.	4.	1.	1.	1.	0.

There are some common factors in the two case studies. Both Carol and Jeremy attended the selective grammar school (School 2) and said that increasing demands of homework and revision of examinations took up an increasing proportion of their leisure time. Both children had high scores on all standardised tests.

CarolCase Study 2

Carol attended the mixed selective Grammar School. She scored 14.8 on the nonell Test in 1975, and listed 10 books read in school and 6 books read out of school. Her favourite writer was Noel Streatfield, and her favourite book was Ballet Shoes.

In her first year in secondary school she listed 11 books in February and 12 books in June. She obtained most of her books from the public library. Her lists included 3 or 4 non-fiction books on each occasion. In February one book she had re-read, Ballet Shoes for the third time in June, three books were re-reading, and she included 3 books by Enid Blyton, Well Done Secret Seven, her own book, re-read for the second time. She also listed 2 teenage magazines, and said she read newspapers more than she had done previously.

In the second year in the secondary school there was a considerable decline in the number of books listed. She listed 4 in February and 3 in June. In February one book was a re-reading of the same Enid Blyton title as on the previous occasion. In June she had re-read Carrie, one of the books listed in February, and her favourite book read in that year. With this reduction in the number of books listed was an increase in the listing of teenage magazines. She listed 8 of these read regularly in 1977, with Mates, Mirabelle, Fab 208, Jackie and Diana as favourites.

In 1978 she listed 2 books on each occasion, The Omen and Audrey Rose in February, and in June 2 books by Josephine Kamm named as her favourite writer at the end of the survey. She was listing 3 magazines read regularly, with Oh Boy the favourite. Her television viewing had increased to 2 or 3 hours every day. It had been half an hour to an hour in the first year of the survey. She said her main interests were television viewing and going out with friends. She sometimes went ice-skating. Carol's case study provides an example of a child of high ability whose reading patterns showed a marked decline in the three years of the survey. Her scores on the Widespan tests were 115 and 118, and her percentile on the APU Vocabulary Test was 73. On the verbal Intelligence Test she scored 120.

There does not seem to have been any home influence on her reading. Her parents were both busy social workers. Her listings of books in the last year indicated a greater influence from friends and from the media.

JeremyCase Study 22

Jeremy attended the mixed selective Grammar school. In June 1975 he scored 14.5 on the Schonell Word Recognition Test, and listed 8 books read in school and 4 books read out of school. He liked reading Science-Fiction. His favourite author was Nicholas Fisk, and his favourite book Trillions. He watched television for two to three hours a day. His favourite programme was The Survivors. He was a member of the public library, and there were plenty of books at home. All the family liked reading and he borrowed books from his mother and from his elder sister. He got books for presents

and spent some of his pocket money on books. He had other interests. He liked football and music.

In his first year in secondary school, 1976, Jeremy developed several new interests. He joined a Gymnastics club, a Church club, and started clarinet lessons. He listed 7 books in February 1976. One was Lord of the Rings which he had not finished. On the questionnaire he wrote: "Lord of the Rings it is a good book and it is 3 books in one. I read the first book it is a bit of a follow on from the Hobbit. And I will read it again when I am a bit older." His favourite book read in that half year was 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea. He said, "I like reading. I learn a lot. I read more, and different kinds of books, a lot of science-fiction and adventure."

In June 1976 he listed 4 books. One was The Hobbit, re-read for the third time. He had finished the first volume of Lord of the Rings, and named Tolkien as his favourite author. He thought he was spending less time reading. He had given up using the school library and the public library, and had listed only his own books. He was reading less for various reasons. School examinations had just finished. He spent a lot of time staying at school for games, then riding home on his bicycle. He kept up all his other interests, so had less time to read.

After the first year of the survey Jeremy read very little. Jeremy is an example of a child of high ability who read a lot in the primary school, then read less in each successive year, listing no books at all in June 1978, at the end of the survey.

In February 1977 he listed Scouting for Boys, unfinished, and said he had done no other reading except the Farmer's Weekly. He said he had occasionally visited the library and took out books on railways. He had joined a Model Railway Society and had added War Games and Rugby to his list of interests. He enjoyed most of his lessons, and obtained the highest grades in his class for Mathematics, Chemistry and Physics. He had enjoyed reading Watership Down in English lessons.

In June 1977 he listed one book, The Eagle has Landed by Alistair MacLean, borrowed from a friend. He said homework and other interests took up all his time. He did not have time to read. "If I have spare time I prefer going down the park, or something like that". On the scale to measure attitude towards reading, administered on this occasion, he scored 53.

In February 1978 he listed one non-fiction book about driving. High Performance Driving for You. He said, "I read a lot about cars and things". He thought he read for about half-an-hour a day. He read newspapers, The Daily Telegraph, Farmer's Weekly, Radio Times and T.V. Times. He mentioned 2 books read in English lessons, Walkabout and Lord of the Flies. He listed no books in June, 1978.

7. Moderate to heavy readers

It was difficult at the end of the study to categorise children as either moderate or heavy readers. Some listed in the moderate category on some occasions and in the heavy category on others. There were 16 children who listed in these categories and had mean scores overall of between 3 and 7 books.

Of these moderate to heavy readers, eight were in school 1, two in school 2, two in school 3, one in school 4 and three in school 5. Among them were the two pairs of identical boy twins. All four of the boys provided good examples of readers in this group and are included in the case studies (Case Studies 29 and 30, 31 and 32). One girl Iris (Case Study 9), the twin sister of Gary (Case Study 28) is also described as a moderate to heavy reader.

Alan and Barry

Case Study 31 and 32

The twins Alan and Barry were identical boy twins who attended the link comprehensive school. The boys were very alike in appearance, and also in their interests, including their reading interests. They were of similar ability, scoring 13.8 and 14.2 respectively on the Schonell Word Recognition Test in 1975, and both obtaining high scores on standardised tests given during the survey. They were the highest scorers in the sample, with 135 and 127, on the Non-Verbal Test DH.

The twins were enthusiastic readers in the primary school. They were members of a group of children who read a lot and recommended books to each other. They shared books and often read the same books. In June 1975, Alan listed 4 books read in school and 2 books out of school. Barry listed 6 books read in school and 2 read out of school. Their favourite author at the time was W.E. Johns, and each of them named a Biggles book as a favourite book.

Their allegiance to W.E. Johns lasted until February 1976, when they both said they had read about ten of his books since June 1975, and he was still their favourite author in February 1976. Having read most of W.E. Johns they looked for another author and discovered Desmond Bagley. They read most of his books in the next six months. When the researcher met them in June they had read all his books they could find. They said, "We've read the lot". Barry was on the last book. He said, "I'm taking it on holiday with me". Both named their favourite book as Freedom Trap by Bagley. Alan had taken out the first Bagley book from the school library in January, and they had bought others with Christmas tokens.

The twins thought they read "quite a bit" out of school. Both were enthusiastic readers. For the first time, in June 1976, the researcher detected a greater enthusiasm in Barry. He listed more books than his brother and talked more about the books. Both boys liked re-reading favourite books. They recommended books to each other, and to their friends. Their favourite comics were Battle and Warlord. Both boys had a lot of outside interests, particularly football. They were sorry they had finished most of Bagley's books. Barry said, "We'll find someone else's - nearly as good as his, or better. We haven't found one yet". Alistair Maclean was "not quite as good". Alan listed 5 books and Barry listed 7 books, in June 1976. The twins listed only fiction books throughout the survey, and were listing adult books, mostly thrillers, from the first year. They both read the same books and comics. They enjoyed comics in the first two years, but listed none in the third year. They liked television and watched two or three hours a day. They both read the newspapers taken at home, The Daily Mirror and The Sunday Express. Their father sometimes suggested books to them (e.g. the William books) but they preferred to find their own.

In 1977 the boys were looking for some reading material to interest them, and had difficulty in finding it, hooked on adult thriller like those of Bagley and MacLean, the school offered them in English lessons in 1977, Fireweed, I am David, A Pair of Jesus Boots and The Silver Sword, all books which might be expected to appeal to boys of this age group. They liked these books but preferred adult novels. They gave up borrowing books from the school library in this year.

Barry: "They've only junior books - things like that.
Some I've read in the primary school."

Alan: "The books that we read in English lessons aren't
very good. A couple of books have been just everyday
happenings."

Neither criticism of the school could be justified. Alan had found his first Bagley book in the school library, and the subject matter of books like Fireweed, about the London blitz, or The Silver Sword, an escape across Europe in the Second World War, can hardly be described as "everyday happenings".

In February 1977, Alan listed only 1 book and Barry 2 books, the only occasion on which their listings came in the 'light' reader category. On this occasion they were unwilling to talk about books in their interviews, and it appeared that they were losing interest in reading. This reluctance to talk about books, almost a reluctance to admit they liked reading, persisted. Remarks like those quoted above are typical of an attitude, off-hand and non-committal, which prevailed in interview sessions for the rest of the survey. The same attitude was reflected in the short written pieces of June 1978.

However, a strange phenomenon occurred. While they were reluctant to admit it, they continued to read, in spite of a feeling, possibly a peer group pressure, that reading was not a desirable activity to claim. Both boys went on borrowing from the public library out of school, and continued to buy books with their pocket money. Exhausting Bagley and MacLean, they still re-read their favourites and tried new authors, listing books by Michael Cronin

and Basil Copper. In June 1977 Alan listed 5 books and Barry listed 7 books. On the scale to measure attitude to reading, administered on the same occasion, Alan scored 59 and Barry scored 76. They continued to list books in the 'heavy' reader category until the end of the survey, listing 5 and 7 books respectively in February 1978, and 6 and 8 books in June 1978. They listed the highest total numbers of books of the children in the link comprehensive school. Alan's total for 6 occasions was 26 books. Barry's total was 38 books.

The researcher's impression that Barry was a more enthusiastic reader than his brother was reinforced by his score on the attitude scale, and also by the fact that he continued to list more books than his brother on every occasion. Often it was Barry who went to the library to choose new books, and found a new author to try. It seemed that Alan might have read less without the interest he shared with his brother.

Both boys maintained their various interests in sport, which absorbed a lot of their leisure time. They both had a strong practical bent for Woodwork and Metalwork, and obtained high marks for these subjects in school. They also obtained high marks in school examinations for Mathematics and Physics.

The twins present two more examples of children with high ability who established an interest in reading in the junior school, and did not give up reading in the secondary school, despite demands on their time of part-time jobs (paper rounds), several time-consuming interests in sports like football and judo, and peer group pressures which regarded reading as a suspect activity. They were listing more books at the end of the survey than the beginning. At the end of the third year they named Desmond Bagley and Alistair MacLean as favourite authors, and two books by Bagley as outstanding books. In two years they had not found other authors of equal interest to them. It is possible that with some guidance or advice from adults they may have discovered new areas of reading to explore and enjoy.

SIMON AND THOMAS

CASE STUDIES 29 and 30

Simon and Thomas attended the boys Comprehensive School. Of West Indian origin, they were identical twins who were always together. Their one common interest was in sport of all kinds and they excelled in various games and sports. Both played football for the school at Junior and Secondary level. Each of them was good at athletics, specialising in different events, often reaching standards high enough to compete in school and district events. As time went on they developed new interests in tennis, cricket and golf. However, outside sport, their interests diverged, including their reading interests. They were not of similar ability. In the Junior School Simon scored 9.0 on the Schonell Test and Thomas scored 13.1. Thomas had higher scores than his brother on all the standardised tests given during the survey.

Their parents had chosen to send them to a single sex school. They were both encouraged to read. They were members of the public library and they received books for presents and had money to spend

on books. In June 1975 Simon listed 2 books read in school and 1 book out of school. Thomas listed 9 books read in school and 3 out of school. Simon had no favourite author and Thomas named Enid Blyton.

They continued to list books throughout the survey. After the second year of the survey they left School 5 and were sent to a boarding school in another part of the country. The researcher kept in touch with them and they completed the two questionnaires in 1978 and were interviewed in June 1978.

In 1975, Simon said he liked fairy tales and ghost stories, and non-fiction books on animals. Thomas liked fairy tales and science-fiction, or non-fiction books on Science and Human Biology.

Various members of the family suggested books for the twins to read, especially their mother and their aunt, and an older cousin who recommended books to them.

Simon

Case Study 29

In 1976 Simon found it difficult to read all the questionnaire and often stopped to ask the meaning of words. He listed 5 books in February although 4 of them were unfinished. He said Enid Blyton was his favourite author and Five Go to Mystery Moor his favourite book. He said he liked reading "It furthers your education". He listed 6 comics, all "funnies" like Beano and Dandy. In June he listed 6 books, 4 of them non-fiction on either sport or animals. The other two books were Charley Brown and Jaws, which he found too difficult and left unfinished. He borrowed books from family and friends, and was influenced in his choice of books by other people. Most of his books he read were borrowed from members of the family or the school library. It was evident that Simon found reading difficult and needed people to help him at this stage in his reading development. (In 1976 he scored only 84 on the Widespan Reading Test).

This help and support was supplied in the first two years of the survey. In Simon's home environment there were plenty of books and several people who enjoyed reading themselves and encouraged Simon to read. These were notably his mother, his aunt, his cousin and his brother Thomas. In school he also received help and encouragement from the English teacher and the Head of the Lower School. He remember^{ed} in detail a story, Old Yeller, read aloud to the class in Summer 1976.

In February 1977 he listed 9 books, 8 of them non-fiction. The one fiction book was borrowed from a friend, and others were all from the public library. They were all books not specifically listed by a teacher, but all chosen by the pupils as background reading to school work, often associated with topics and projects. Simon preferred to use the public library to seek out these non-fiction books. In June he listed 2 fiction and 3 non-fiction books. The 3 non-fiction books were again from the public library but the two fiction books from the class library, White Fang and Emil and the Detectives, the former ticked as one of the best

books ever read. He was encouraged by teachers to borrow books from the class library. He talked about this at some length and also mentioned books read in the English lesson, The Otterbury Incident and Shane. He reported that the teacher frequently read aloud to the children in English lessons. Simon had interests which took up a lot of his leisure time, especially athletics. He also like watching television for 2 or 3 hours a day and developed a new interest in Design and Technology. Although he found reading difficult, and had these other interests, influences of home and school were strong enough to keep Simon's interest in reading. On the scale to measure attitude towards reading, administered in June 1977, he scored 72. Despite his low ability and his various distracting and time-consuming interests, he developed a firmly established reading habit. He did not lose this when he left home to attend a boarding school, which was also a mixed comprehensive school.

In 1978 he listed 1 book in February and 4 books in June. In February he read Jaws, a book left unfinished in 1976. In June he read The Godfather borrowed from his brother and 3 books on Athletics, Swimming and Rugby, all from the school library.

Thomas

Case Study 30

Thomas listed 7 books and 5 comics in February 1976. He said his favourite reading was non-fiction. His favourite author was still Enid Blyton and his favourite book The Land of Far Beyond. He listed 3 fiction books and 4 non-fiction. He said he had given up reading fairy tales and liked "a selection of different books". His list reflect this, composed of The Apple Dumpling Gang, The Human Mind, Good Old Secret Seven, Irish Fairy Tales, Famous Composers, Paris and Let's Visit France.

In June he listed 7 books. His favourite 2 books were non-fiction books called The Heart and The Brain. He said 'I want to be a doctor, like my mum and dad'. Of the three fiction books his favourite was The Hobbit.

Most books were obtained from the school library. Teachers, friends and parents suggested books to read. In 1977 he listed 4 books in February and 15 in June.

In February 1977, he listed one non-fiction and 3 fiction books. One was from the school library, a re-reading of Shane, first read and liked in English lessons. The other 3 books he owned himself.

In June 1977 Thomas listed 15 books, 13 fiction. He was looking for new authors and liked J. Turner. He said Stranger from the Depths was one of the best books he had ever read. He read 2 books from H.G. Wells, The Island of Dr. Moreau and The Time Machine, The Old Man and the Sea by Hemingway, King Solomon's Mines, The Otterbury Incident. There were 3 re-readings, all read for the third time, Shane, The Apple Dumpling Gang and The Land of Far Beyond. The two non-fiction listed were medical books.

The Body, from his mother, and The Skin from the public library. He listed more than twice as many books as on any other occasion. Questioned about this he said "I don't find it easier. I just simply changed."

In 1978 after moving to a new school, he listed 6 books in February and 4 in July. In February he read one non-fiction book, All About Tennis, and 5 fiction books, all books he had bought for himself. He listed these as The Lord of the Flies, A Fine Night for Dying, The Intercom Conspiracy, The American Ghost and Macbeth (well a play). He also listed 7 comics and magazines. These were Shoot, Beano, Horse and Hound, Motor Sport, Autocar, Warlord and Marvel.

In July he listed 4 fiction books and 3 magazines. The books were two re-readings from the February list, and Anna and Catch 22. Again these books were all books he had bought for himself. The magazines were Horse and Hound, Shoot and Scientific World. He listed 5 newspapers to read, the Daily Mirror, Sunday Mirror, Sunday People, News of the World and the Sunday Telegraph. In boarding school there was time to read several Sunday papers. He was watching television only $\frac{1}{2}$ hour a day, and an hour at weekends.

In the twins, Simon and Thomas, can be seen an example of two children who were of very different ability, but were both keen readers at their different levels. With the same strong influences from home and school in the junior school they developed a reading habit. On the scale to measure attitude to reading Simon scored 72 and Thomas 89. When they left home they were sent to a boarding school there was no change in their commitment to reading. Both boys went on reading books, magazines and newspapers. Thomas, the more able of the two boys, read more books than his brother.

Iris

Case Study 9

Iris was one of the non-identical twins. Her brother Gary has already been described in Case Study 28. At the beginning of the survey. The twins shared interests and were of similar ability. Gary scored 12.6 on the Schonell Test and Iris scored 12.1. They both listed books read in school and out of school, Gary listing 14 books and 4 books, and Iris listing 8 books and 4 books. Both named Enid Blyton as a favourite author. Both read comics. They were members of a public library and borrowed books from both public library and school library, some fiction and some non-fiction. Both had other interests. Gary like football and pop music. Iris like dancing and took piano lessons. Their parents had chosen to send them separately to single-sex schools. They were encouraged to visit the library, given books for presents, and given money to buy books. They read

books belonging to their elder sister, and both their mother and their sister suggested books for them to read. The family took three daily newspapers, the Daily Express, the Daily Mirror and The Times, and three Sunday newspapers, The Sunday Express, the News of the World, and the Sunday Times.

When they started at different secondary schools their tastes diverged.

Iris

In 1976, in her first year in Secondary School, there was no change in Iris's reading interests. She did a lot of re-reading and she named Michael Bond as her favourite author. In February she listed Winnie the Pooh and Paddington Bear borrowed from someone in the family, and a book on Greece and The Latch Key Children, borrowed from the school library. The last book was unfinished. The book on Greece was used for a project. She listed three magazines, Woman's Realm, Warlord and Pink. She was reading some of the family newspapers, the Daily Express and The Sun, and watching television 3 hours a day.

In June she listed 13 books, of which 6 were re-reading and 4 were unfinished. Most of them were books available at home, belonging to members of the family, her twin brother or her older sister, aged 17. Re-readings were books by Enid Blyton, Michael Bond and A.A. Milne, and Heidi by Joanna Spyri. Two of her favourite books were about horses, Black Beauty and Follyfoot. It seemed that she spent a lot of her time reading, she thought about 2 hours on a weekday but she read fairly slowly and often her unfinished books were overdue library books which she returned unfinished.

She continued to spend the same amount of time in reading throughout the survey, but in the next two years she spent more time reading magazines, and her taste gradually changed.

In February 1977 she listed 12 magazines, some of these were children's comics like Beano and Beezer. Some were girls' teenage magazines like Bunty, Jackie and Mates. Some were women's magazines like Woman's Own, Woman's Realm and Woman's Weekly. Her list of 7 books were still all children's books, but there were no re-readings. She either borrowed or bought books which were new to her, including some Enid Blyton's, but also Watership Down, Emil and the Detectives and Anne of Green Gables. She watched a lot of television, up to 4 hours a day and went to a dancing class, Girl Guides and a Youth Club. She like the two books she had read in English lessons, The Silver Sword and On the Run. In June 1977 she listed 4 books, one a re-reading of A.A. Milne, When we were Six, the other three borrowed from friends.

In 1978 she stopped reading children's comics and listed only teenage magazines and women's magazines. She had listed a new magazine for teenages, Emma which she said was "mostly stories". In February she listed 6 books, all fiction. Three of these were

Katy books by Susan M. Coolidge, all given to her by her sister. One was Bambi borrowed from the public library and ticked as one of the best books she had ever read. She tried one adult book The Great Gatsby but did not finish it "because it was boring". In June she listed no children's books and had found a new source of reading material. She listed Love's Avenging Heart and Love's Wildest Promise (authors not known) borrowed from friends. She wrote on the questionnaire in the space provided, "They are very thick books, so with exams, I've only been able to read two. Also everyone wants to borrow them, so first come, first served". She had also been learning a part for the school play. In the last year she developed a new interest in Sunday School teaching. She wanted to train as a Sunday School Teacher and had arranged to go on a weekend course connected with this. She said, "That's really my hobby now." She also like dancing and acting and had a Saturday job in a baker's shop.

Her favourite school subjects were Religious Knowledge, History and Geography. She mentioned only one book read in English lessons, The Goalkeeper's Revenge. Her reading interests seemed little influenced by the school. After the first years she listed no books borrowed from the school library from 1977, obtaining all her books from friends, from her older sister or the public library. On the last occasion of the survey the predominant influence was clearly that of her friends in the peer group, who were passing around the love stories she mentioned in interviews, and waiting for a turn to read the most popular books. They also read and discussed their favourite teenage magazines. In June 1978 Iris listed Pink, Oh Boy and O.K. She had given up reading children's books and wanted to read only adult books. She talked at length about her liking for the two love stories she had read. She was waiting to borrow a third book of the same kind which belonged to a friend's sister, and she had been promised this for the holiday. Meanwhile she had taken Gone with the Wind from the library and was in the middle of reading it. "I read a short version of it, but then I went to the library there was a much bigger version of it".

8. Very heavy readers

There were four girls and one boy who were very heavy readers. Two of the girls were from School 2, two from School 3, and the boy was from School 5. One girl (Kate. Case Study 1) and one boy (Morris. Case Study 26) are presented in the case studies.

The number of books listed by these five children on the six occasions are given in Table 48.

TABLE 48. Number of books listed by the 5 heavy readers

I.D. Number	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	46	33	31	31	28	13
3	41	24	24	11	13	6
7	12	24	11	4	15	8
10	17	22	24	12	17	17
26	10	12	9	12	12	15

KATE

Case Study 1

In the junior school, completing the questionnaire in June 1975, Kate listed 25 books read in school and 32 books read out of school. Her score on the Schonell Test was 13.5.

She had a close friend who listed even more books than she did (28 and 40). During that year they were inseparable. They exchanged books, brought them to school, discussed their favourites and recommended books to each other (and incidentally to other children in the class). They greatly influenced each other and had similar tastes in reading at that time. Kate liked fantasy more than anything else and was not as enthusiastic about science-fiction, although she read a lot in this category. Neither of the girls had marked any of their books as unfinished. When the researcher commented on the number of books listed, pointing out that this amounted to almost one a day, they said they were quite correct; they did read one a day and sometimes more if the books were short.

Both girls had underlined several books which they were re-reading for the second or third time. On examination these proved to be easier books than the others on the list, and mostly books they owned. They were old favourites on their bedroom shelves, which they returned to for light relief after trying new, and sometimes more difficult books. Kate had listed as re-reading Enid Blyton, Michael Bond and a number of fairy stories. She had already passed through and beyond a 'Blyton' stage.

She listed no comics. She said she like fantasy, adventure and mystery books. Her current favourite author was Ursula Le Guin, and her favourite book A Wizard of Earthsea. She watched television for about three hours a day, and had numerous outside interests, including Guides, ballet and music.

At the end of the junior school, Kate's reading list reflected influence of home and school. At home there were plenty of books. She estimated she owned about 300. She was influenced by her parents, and she read stories to her younger sisters; she was influenced by teachers and friends, particularly her one close friend.

Thus, Kate left the junior school a committed reader, aware of the wide range of books available, and ready to try anything and everything, and to accept the recommendations of teachers, parents and friends.

In the next three years these factors remained constant. Although she built up additional interests in school and out, and pressures of homework and revision for examinations increased, the amount of reading she did remained consistently high, though the pattern varied for different reasons. After six months of secondary school, she listed 46 books and 4 comics, and maintained that, of course, she had read them all. In the junior school she had listed all fiction books. Now she listed some non-fiction, due to school influence, and started reading comics, due to peer group influence. She mentioned Look-in, Jinty, Bunty, and T.V. Comic. She still exchanged books and views with her friend, who had transferred to the same school. She no longer had one favourite writer, but mentioned Joan Aiken, Penelope Lively, Richard Adams, John Wyndham and Pamela Brown. "They're all good writers".

A Wizard of Earthsea was still her favourite book. "It's a good story - interesting and puzzling". She made extensive use of the school library and had read four books in English lessons; The Otterbury Incident, Dragon in the Garden, Smith and A Hundred Million Francs. There were books linked with her hobbies, ballet and Guides (Veronica at the Wells and Guides at Camp.) "But they're not very well written".

There were some books currently serialised on television; A Little Princess and Tom's Midnight Garden, but in each case she had read the book first. Her list included a number of adult books, among them Jane Eyre, Pride and Prejudice and The Day of the Triffids. A new interest in mythology, growing from her love of fantasy, is reflected in many of the titles. She had read Iliad and the Odessey in Penguin, Greek Legends, Tales and Legends from Russia and Japan, a book called Heroes of Ancient Greece and The God Beneath the Sea and The Golden Shadow by Garfield and Blishen. When asked to comment on the change in her reading tastes she said, "I read my Mum's and Dad's books more, but normally I read all the book I can lay my hands on".

In June, at the end of the first year, she listed 33 books, of these 25 were re-readings of Enid Blyton, Michael Bond, Penelope Lively, C.S. Lewis, Nicholas Fisk and Catherine Storr. These included some of Storr's books for younger readers, which belonged to her younger sisters. She said, "I read all my sister's easy books before she does". She had also read some of her father's books, including the Goon scripts. The reason for this change in the pattern of her reading was the fact that school examinations had left her no time to buy new books or visit the library in the last month, so for relaxation she turned to favourites at home. "Everybody in the family's busy".

When asked what she had enjoyed most in that year, she talked at length about her new interest in mythology which her mother shared. They had read a lot of books on mythology, obtaining some from the public library and buying some in paperbacks. Also her father had joined a history book club.

In the following year, 1977, Kate retained all her outside interests and in school started to take clarinet lessons and joined the wind band. Time devoted to homework increased. She watched television less. She still listed some comics, and in February and June listed 31 books.

In February her list included more adult books than children's books, and reflected a mixture of everything from Snoopy to Robert Graves. She had read all the Claudius books and said they were her current favourites. "I watched it... I kind of hovered towards wanting to read it and everybody said they're great big, long books. Did you find them difficult? No, because I enjoyed reading them".

She had read a lot of myths and legends. "I like a lot of Greek mythology... then I had this passion for King Arthur and ended up reading three books all by different authors". She had read several books by James Herriot and had re-read C.S. Lewis and Ursula Le Guin.

In July with examinations again a major pressure, she listed mainly children's books, with 10 re-readings. There were only three adult titles. One of these was The Fellowship of the Ring.

In the last year of the survey, 1978, Kate gave up reading comics, and the number of books was reduced, fractionally to 28 in February and, more noticeably to 13 in July, with school examinations assuming greater importance, with 'O' level choices to be made for the following year.

In February adult authors dominate the list. For favourite reading she mentioned Henry Treece, Antonia Fraser, Isaac Asimov, James Herriot, Agatha Christie and John Wyndham ("I read all his books last month").

The July questionnaire showed an interesting comparison with the previous year. Whereas in 1977 during school examinations she had reverted to reading more children's books. In 1978 she listed no children's books, except The Green Bronze Mirror, an historical novel written by a fourteen-year-old girl, but published as an adult novel. The 13 books listed were either ones she owned herself or ones she borrowed from friends or members of the family.

She listed two non-fiction history books, five novels by Agatha Christie, re-readings of I, Claudius and Claudius the God and four books borrowed from friends, The Omen, The Exorcist, Audrey Rose and The Green Bronze Mirror.

The process from reading all children's books (June 1975) to reading almost all adult books (July 1978) had taken just three years.

Kate left the junior school with a firmly established reading habit, and her commitment to reading was not affected by various influences and pressures encountered in the first three years of the secondary school. She obtained high scores on all the standardised tests given during the survey, and scored 89 on the scale to measure attitude to reading. It may be suggested that children like Kate, who are already 'readers' by the age of eleven do not give up easily, once the reading habit is established, and that they will go on to discover and enjoy other kinds of reading for themselves, and accept recommendations from other individuals who also enjoy reading, whether friends, parents or teachers.

*(See Appendix 7 for published article on Case Study 1)

Morris

Case Study 26

Morris attended the boys' comprehensive school. He scored 14.1 on the Schonell Test in 1975 and listed 6 books read in school and 15 read out of school. Of the 15 read out of school 13 were by Enid Blyton. He named Enid Blyton as his favourite author and The Mystery of Holly Lane as his favourite book. He mentioned one comic and he watched a lot of television. He borrowed books from the public library.

After he started secondary school, Morris listed more non-fiction than fiction on every occasion. He continued to read books by Enid Blyton, still listing her as his favourite writer in February 1976, but did not seem interested in looking for other fiction.

In February 1976, he listed 10 books, 7 of them non-fiction. His favourite school subjects were History, French and Classical Foundation. He said, "I usually like reading General Knowledge and books that are included in my work. I also like reading Enid Blyton's books".

In July 1976, he listed 12 books, all non-fiction except for QB VII, which he had obtained after seeing the film on television. He said he found the book difficult and skipped parts. Ten out of the twelve books were obtained from the public library. Most of the non-fiction books were connected with work in his three favourite subjects.

In February 1977, he listed 9 books, 7 of these non-fiction. Once again the fiction books were chosen because of the influence of the media. Both The Thirty Nine Steps and Murder on the Orient Express he had seen as films first.

In July 1977, he listed 12 books, 8 non-fiction and 4 fiction. He had borrowed To Kill a Mocking Bird from a friend and said it was one of the best books he had ever read "I loved that book".

In 1978, he listed 12 books in February and 15 books in June. Of these two were novels by John Steinbeck, listed in June. In this year he no longer visited the school library, but obtained all his books from the public library. He had moved from the Lower School to the Upper School on another site, and found it easier to get his books outside school, than visit the Upper School library, which he did not know. In English lessons in 1978 he had read Pygmalion, Henry V and Of Mice and Men. ("I really liked that").

It is interesting to note that, as he was mainly a reader of non-fiction, the 2 novels he listed in that year were by John Steinbeck after he had been introduced to this author in English lessons.

The interests which Morris developed in the secondary school are reflected in his choice of non-fiction reading. The titles he listed over the three years were mainly concerned with History, Geography and Mythology and Languages. At the end of the survey he named as his favourite book, Alistair Cooke's America. In 1978 he had read other books on America, South America, Africa and India.

In his choice of non-fiction, Morris was guided by his various interests. In his choice of fiction, which over the period of the survey amounted to two or three novels a year, it seems that he was either influenced by television viewing or by English lessons.

The Twins

As all four pairs of twins were included in the sample, the eight children have all been described in the case studies.

As the reader will have noted, the identical twins of the same sex, Alan and Barry, and Simon and Thomas, were all in the category of moderate to heavy readers. All four boys had a firmly established reading habit at 10+, which they maintained through the three years of the survey. The pairs differ in three ways; in race, in socio-economic group, and also in the fact that Alan and Barry were of similar ability, and Simon and Thomas were not. In each pair the boys had similar tastes at 10+. Alan and Barry continued to have similar interests, but for Simon and Thomas their interests diverged, and they continued to read at their different levels throughout the survey.

For the non-identical twins of different sexes, Iris and Gary, and Maureen and Norman, in each pair the children had no interests in common after the junior school. In the secondary school their interests diverged, both for Maureen and Norman in the same school, and for Iris and Gary in separate schools. There are some comparisons to be made between the pairs. They are of the same socio-economic group, and of similar ability. In each pair of twins the children had low scores, between 92 and 99 on the Verbal Test EF. On standardised reading tests Norman had higher scores than Maureen on the Schonell and Widespan Tests. Iris generally scored higher than Gary on the tests. The weakest of the four children was Maureen, who is given in the case studies as an example of a child who found reading difficult. Iris is given as an

example of a girl reader in the moderate to heavy category. In each pair of twins, the girl generally listed more books than her brother, and occasionally lent him a book. The case studies report instances of the boy twin listing a book which his sister had brought home. Each of the girl twins consistently listed books, while her twin brother was a reader with a fluctuating pattern. Apart from Gary's enthusiasm for reading in Year 2, both boys were not willing to look for books themselves, and are given as examples of reluctant readers with fluctuating patterns.

These marked differences, between the pairs of identical twins of the same sex and the non-identical twins of different sexes, emerge clearly in the case studies. It can be observed that identical twins of the same sex are likely to have similar reading habits and interests, especially if they are also of similar ability, but where there are less variables in common this is not to be expected.

CHAPTER TEN

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The survey started as a small-scale longitudinal study, stemming from the suggestion in the Schools Council Working Paper 52, in 1975, that small-scale studies were needed to follow up the national survey. This study followed the national survey in many respects, its claims to uniqueness being that it was longitudinal and took a small sample of children which was a stable, homogeneous group from one primary school. From the outset it was evident that no generalisations could be made to the child population as a whole, because of the particular composition of the sample.

Three years later, in 1978, it seemed that the findings of this survey were not very different from those of the national survey, whether one studied 8000 children or 40 children, results showed that girls did read more than boys; children did read more fiction than non-fiction; children with fathers in non-manual occupations did list more books than children with fathers in manual occupations; children with high scores on standardised tests listed more books than children with low scores; children who attended grammar schools and single-sex schools listed more books than children who attended mixed comprehensive schools. None of these findings was unexpected.

From an examination of the mean scores of books listed for the whole sample of 40 children, it seemed that the findings would also support the view of the national survey that children read less as they grow older, and that the number of non-book-readers increases. The mean scores did decrease in each successive year of the survey. However, a closer examination of the scores in relation to the reading of individual children raised several questions in the small-scale study which must have implications for a larger survey.

While the mean scores indicated a marked decrease in the listings for the girls over three years, this was seen to give a false impression of the situation, because of the presence of four avid girl readers in the sample. This raised a question of methodology, in

the appropriateness of always using mean scores to examine research findings of this kind. In this study the median scores were a truer reflection of the scores of the majority of the girl readers.

It was also noted that while the girls listed less books in each successive year, with a gradual decrease, this was not the case for the boys. The mean scores for the boys fluctuated, with slightly higher scores in June than in February for each year of the survey, and a difference of only 3.9 books to 3.2 books, between the first occasion and the last.

The reasons for higher book listings in June than in February are not clear, although some were suggested by the answers of children in interviews. As discussed in Chapter 8, higher figures for the re-reading of books in June may have been due to pressure of school work at examination time, and applied to both boys and girls, whereas the reasons given by several boys, of greater time devoted to football in the Winter months, was a factor which may only have an influence in a sample as small as 40 children.

The general decrease in book reading for the children in the sample was seen to be the result of many influencing factors and most of these were also those mentioned in the nation-wide survey; television viewing; the increased pressures of school examinations; the taking of part-time jobs; the increased freedom to go out in the evenings; new interests and hobbies; the joining of teams and clubs; and the wish to be with friends in the peer group rather than at home with the family.

Yet, with all these influences at work, there did not seem to be unwillingness to read but rather a reluctance to engage with books. In fact, in examining closely the reading of many of the children, it seemed doubtful whether they actually read less, merely because they listed less books. Many of them greatly increased their newspaper reading and magazine reading, and all of them were certainly reading more for homework than they had done in the junior school. Whether a daily diet of The Sun, or Superman comic, or Jackie, constitutes reading may be a matter for debate. What is a non-reader? Can the term be applied to the boy who regularly reads Motor Mechanic and the New Musical Express? Or to the girl who reads ten teenage magazines a week?

Another question arises. Have such children given up book reading permanently, or is this a temporary phase? Will they return to reading books in a year or so? The Schools Council team was criticised because their survey stopped at the age of 14 years. It may be that children who give up reading between the ages of 11 and 14 years will return to it at 15, 16 or 17 years. Perhaps future studies of secondary school children through to 18 years will provide answers.

It has been suggested in Chapter 9 that of the 40 children in this sample only one could be strictly called a non-reader. Four other children might be termed non-book-readers. Five non-book-reading children still constitute only 12½% of the sample, providing a more optimistic view of the reading of this group of children than that of the Schools Council survey, which reported 36% of non-readers at 14+.

Apart from Luke (Case Study 33), the one boy described as a non-reader, children did not seem unwilling to read. In interviews children said that sometimes they read just to pass the time, to alleviate boredom. However, they also wanted to read to find out more about the world around them, about current affairs, about possible careers. There was also a feeling that one ought to read, that it does help your English, will help with the school work generally. There was also the desire to read as a means of exploring the strange and the unknown, which manifested itself in a love of fantasy, or horror stories, or ghost stories or Science-Fiction. The need and the wish to read adult fiction, to bridge the gap into the adult world, began at 10+ and grew in intensity. Children were willing to tackle more difficult reading matter, far beyond their reading levels, in order to sample adult fiction. For many children there is also a groping for guidance, and a wish for more adult help in finding suitable books. The survey showed that few boys went on reading children's books after the age of eleven, and while the girls listed children's books throughout the survey, only the 4 prolific girl readers (10% of the sample) were reading books by the most-acclaimed writers of modern fiction for children.

Despite the willingness and the wish to read, many children do not choose to increase their book reading, but rather turn to newspapers and magazines in their leisure time. Such reading is of short-term duration, and does not demand the same kind of commitment as getting involved in a book.

In addition to all the distracting influences mentioned earlier, there seem to be other reasons which may discourage children from book reading. Often the right books are not available. Children are frustrated by not finding the book they want. Sometimes attractive covers may be misleading, or publishers descriptions inaccurate. There are not enough helpful adults to guide and encourage. Books, when found, may prove to be too difficult to read. For many children the desire to read dwindles. The Schools Council team suggested (Whitehead, 1977) that although it seemed that primary schools were successfully fulfilling their role, they had "an uneasy suspicion that in too many cases the seeds of later trouble were observable in the kind and quality of the book provision made at 10+". This would be difficult to prove, but it does seem that children who leave the primary school with a firmly established reading habit are less likely to be distracted from reading by all the other pressures and influences at work against this in the years between 11 and 14. It also seems that most children who are committed readers by the age of 10 years are likely to go on reading whatever their ability level. Evidence of this is clear in the reading of many of the children in this sample, of varying backgrounds and abilities, as seen in the case studies.

Evidence also suggests that children are likely to go on reading more where there is an interested adult, or adults, to encourage and guide them, whether at home or at school, or both. This applies equally to children of high ability like Alan and Barry, or to children of low ability like Maureen. For some children the school is the only place where one can find help. In school, it seemed that the influence of the English teacher was crucial. This was more important for the less able children, and also for children like Della, for whom the home provided no models and no guidance.

The use of the scale to measure attitude towards reading might be a useful guide for the English teacher, in providing a different view of children's reading than that obtained from scores or standardised tests. The use of a scale with this group of children supported this view. Scores on the attitude scale correlated significantly with the numbers of books listed by the children, and unexpected outlying scores on the scale caused the researcher to review some of the children's attitudes.

The media was seen as a major influence, both on the amount of time given to reading, and also on the children's choice of books, and this has been discussed at some length in Chapter 8.

The use of libraries, both public and school, was also seen as a major factor in influencing the children's reading and their choice of books.

This survey showed that the diversity of tastes and interests, and the range of ability, in this small sample of 40 children, was immense. It is clear that this range needs to be catered for in public libraries, school libraries, class libraries and English lessons, but that finally the child makes reading choices from individual interests and hobbies, and that these choices may be influenced by home and school environments. Each child (and there are few exceptions) has the wish and the will to read. Some children retain it. Some lose it. Whatever their ability, or their stages of development, all children need guidance and encouragement from interested adults if they are to develop their reading ability and their reading interests.

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A P P E N D I C E S.

THE PILOT STUDY

APPENDIX I

Questionnaire given to one year group in June 1975 (n = 120).

NAME:..... AGE:.....

1. Do you get books from a public library?.....
2. How often?.....
2. Do you belong to a book club?..... Which one?.....
3. Name any comics or children's magazines that you read regularly.

4. How do you choose the books you read?

Look at this list and tick the things which help you choose.
Number the 3 things which help you most 1, 2 and 3.

1. Belonging to a library.
2. What parents say.
3. What teachers say.
4. What friends say.
5. The books you can choose in school.
6. Films and T.V. programmes.
7. Your own interests and hobbies.
8. The look of the book.

5. Look at this list and pick out your favourite kind of story. Mark it 1.
Then make a second and third choice. 2 and 3.

Adventure	Loye and Romance
Animal	Mystery
Detective	Science-fiction
Family	School
Fantasy or imaginary	Travel
Fairy tales and legends	War
Historical	Western
Humourous and funny	Picture or Cartoon stories.
Jobs, or what you would like to be	

6. Name any writers you particularly enjoy reading.
7. Name the book you enjoyed reading most this term.
8. On the other sheet you have been given make three lists of the books you have read this term.

LIST A. Books you have read in 'Quiet Reading' time in school.

LIST B. Books you have read out of school.

LIST C. Books you have started but did not finish.

PILOT STUDY

APPENDIX I

In answer to question 4, "How do you choose the books you read?" children gave 1st, 2nd and 3rd choice.

Overall result.

	Score.
1. Your own interests and hobbies	186
2. The look of the book	156
3. Films and T.V. programmes	119
4. The books you can choose in school	79
5. Belonging to a library	58
6. What parents say	42
7. What friends say	38
8. What teachers say	35

Boys

1. Your own interests and hobbies	111
2. Films and T.V. programmes	69
3. The look of the book	67
4. The books you can choose in school	31
5. What parents say	29
6. Belonging to a library	26
7. What friends say	18
8. What teachers say	18

Girls

1. The look of the book	89
2. Your own interests and hobbies	75
3. Films and T.V. programmes	50
4. The books you choose in school	38
5. Belonging to a library	32
6. What parents say	42
7. What friends say	38
8. What teachers say	35

QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS JULY 1975. (n = 120)

FAVOURITE WRITERS. Question 6.

37 Enid Blyton
 18 Michael Bond
 12 Alan Garner
 11 C.S. Lewis
 8 Alfred Hitchcock
 5 Penelope Lively
 Lewis Carrol
 Joan Aiken
 4 Roald Dahl
 Richard Adams
 Nina Bawden
 W.E. Johns
 Ursula Le Guin
 Spike Milligan
 Anthony Buckeridge
 3 Noel Streatfield
 Richard Carpenter
 Charles Dickens
 William Mayne
 Pamela Brown
 Frances Hodgson Burnett
 2 Margaret Bernay
 Lucy Boston
 Doreen Coates
 Winifred Finlay
 Nicholas Fisk
 John Godey
 Anita Hewitt
 Eric Knight
 Anna Sewell
 William Shakespeare
 Mary Travers
 Laura Ingalls Wilder

Writers mentioned once.

William Armstrong
 J.M. Barrie
 E. Beresford
 Paul Brickhill
 John Buchan
 Catherine Cookson
 Richard Crompton
 Peter Dickinson
 Ellis Dillon
 Walt Disney
 Penelope Farmer
 Kenneth Grahame
 Margaret Greaves
 Michael Hardcastle
 Cynthia Harnett
 Jerome K. Jerome
 Rudyard Kipling
 Astrid Lindgren
 Rosemary Manning
 Stella Mead
 L.M. Montgomery
 A.A. Milne
 E. Nesbit
 Mary Norton
 Mary O'Hara
 George Orwell
 Malcom Saville
 Emma Smith
 Richard Scarry
 R.L. Stevenson
 Ian Serrailier
 J.R.R. Tolkien
 A. Waterhouse
 H.G. Wells
 Allison Uttley

FAVOURITE BOOKS

No book was mentioned more than 3 times.

Black Beauty 3 times

Books mentioned twice

United: Michael Hardcastle
 The Weirdestone of Brisingamen: Alan Garner
 A Bear called Paddington: Michael Bond
 Little Town on the Prairie: Laura Ingalls Wilder
 Voyage of the Dawn Treader: C.S. Lewis
 The Wombles: E. Beresford
 Planet of the Apes
 The Six Million Dollar Man
 The Anita Hewitt Animal Story Book
 Trillions. Nicholas Fisk
 Lassie Come Home
 Carrie's War: Nina Bawden
 Run for your Life
 The Winter Princess

Question 5. Favourite categories of fiction (n = 120)

<u>Overall result</u>	<u>Score</u>
1. Picture or Cartoon stories	76
2. Science-Fiction	75
Adventure	75
4. Humourous or Funny	72
5. Mystery	59
6. Animal	54
7. Fantasy or Imaginary	44
8. Love and Romance	39
War	39
10. Fairy Tales and Legends	36
11. Detective	27
12. Western	21
13. Family	15
14. Travel	12
Historical	12
16. School	10
17. Jobs	9

Boys choice

1. Science-Fiction	54
2. Adventure	45
3. Picture or Cartoon	44
4. War	39
5. Mystery	31
6. Humourous or Funny	26
7. Fairy Tales and Legends	20
8. Detective	19
9. Fantasy or Imaginary	18
10. Western	17
11. Animal	15
12. Love and Romance	14
13. Historical	9
Jobs	9
15. School	6
16. Travel	4
17. Family	0

Girls' Choice'

1. Humourous or Funny	46
2. Animal	39
3. Picture or Cartoon	32
4. Adventure	30
5. Mystery	27
6. Fantasy or Imaginary	26
7. Love and Romance	25
8. Science-Fiction	21
9. Fairy Tales and Legends	16
10. Family	15
11. Travel	8
Detective	8
13. Western	4
School	4
15. Historical	3
15. Jobs	0
War	0

APPENDIX 2

THE SAMPLE (Selected June 1975 for longitudinal study 1975-78)

GROUP O			GROUP L		
No.	Date of Birth	Reading Age	No.	Date of Birth	Reading Age
1.	7.4.64	13.5	11	28.4.64	13.1
2.	2.2.64	14.8	12	3.9.63	14.0
3.	14.12.63	13.3	13.	15.9.63	14.4
4.	16.5.64	9.5	14.	14.5.64	9.9
5.	6.2.64	12.9	15.	19.2.64	11.4
6.	12.7.64	10.9	16.	10.7.64	11.6
7.	4.7.64	13.5	17.	14.6.64	14.3
8.	22.8.64	10.8	18.	28.8.64	10.8
9.	8.5.64	12.1	19.	18.5.64	11.6
10.	17.7.64	13.8	20.	20.7.64	14.6
21.	1.4.64	13.5	31.	27.4.64	13.8
22.	26.5.64	14.2	32.	27.4.64	14.2
23.	16.5.64	11.3	33.	16.5.64	13.8
24.	22.9.63	13.3	34.	4.9.63	14.7
25.	28.1.64	9.7	35.	12.2.64	9.9
26.	10.1.64	14.1	36.	18.11.63	14.6
27.	14.9.63	14.8	37.	10.9.63	14.1
28.	8.5.64	11.6	38.	22.6.64	12.4
29.	30.11.63	9.0	39.	5.10.63	8.9
30.	30.11.63	13.1	40.	6.11.63	12.9

QUESTIONNAIRE given to sample. (June 1975) (N = 40)

Name..... Age..... Nationality.....

Home address.....

.....

Telephone number.....

Secondary School.....

Home and family

1. Father's occupation.....

2. Mother's occupation.....

Names and ages of brothers and sisters.

1 years

2 years

3 years

4 years

2. Newspapers and magazines taken regularly in your home

By father.....

By mother.....

By brothers.....

By sisters.....

By yourself.....

3. Do you read any newspapers?.....

If so which parts do you like best?.....

3. How many books would you say there are in your home?

More than 50 Between 20 and 30 Less than 20

4. How many books of your own have you got?.....

5. a. Do you get pocket money?.....

b. Do you spend money on books?.....

c. Do you get books for presents?.....

d. Do you ask for books for presents?.....

Hobbies and interests

6. Do you have any hobbies?.....

What are they?

7. Do you belong to any clubs?.....
If yes, what are they?.....
8. What are your favourite school subjects or lessons?.....
.....
9. What game or sport do you like best to play?.....
10. When you have an hour or two to spend as you please, what do you like
to do best of all?.....

Television, Radio and Films.

11. How much time do you spend looking at T.V.?
On a school day:.....hours At the weekend: hours
12. What is your favourite T.V. programme?
13. How much time do you spend listening to the radio?
On a school day:hours At the weekend'hours
14. How often do you go to the cinema to see a film?.....
15. What is the best film you have ever seen?.....

Reading

16. Can you name any television serials which made you want to get the
book and read it afterwards.....
17. Which are your favourite kinds of non-fiction books?.....
1 2
3 4
18. What is your favourite kind of story?.....
Why do you like this kind?.....
.....
18. Name one of your favourite writers
Why do you like his/her books?.....
.....
20. Name the best book you have ever read?.....
Write a few sentences about the book.....
.....
.....
.....

APPENDIX III

The questionnaire used
during the 3 years of the
survey (1975-1978).

Put a tick in the box ☒ which is near the answer that you choose for every question.

1. DO YOU REGULARLY READ ANY MAGAZINES (OR COMICS)?

NO ☐ 00

YES ☐

If you answer 'YES' write a list of all the magazines (or comics) you read regularly. Write only one on each line. If you only read one or two, put those down.

	1
	2
	3
	4
	5
	6
	7
	8
	9
	10
	11
	12

☐ ☐ (4)

Read down your list and put a tick ☒ after the one you most of all look forward to reading. Now go on to Question 2.

2. HAVE YOU READ A BOOK (OR BOOKS) IN THE LAST FOUR WEEKS?

Don't count books which a teacher said you must read as part of a lesson or for homework. Don't count stories which are told mainly in pictures.

☐ NO

☐ YES

If you answer 'NO' go on to Question 8 on page 4.

If you answer 'YES' fill in page 2.

Don't start this page until you've written your list of books on page 2

Put down those books you got outside school and those you chose yourself from the class library or the school library.

Don't put down the names of stories told mainly in pictures.

(We've written two books down to show you how to do it.)

[illegible]

For every book, choose **one** of the answers to question 6 and **one** of the answers to question 7. Put a tick on the same line as the book under the answer you choose.

After you've filled in the boxes for the books in your list, you can write anything else you'd like to say about any of them in this space. |

The Men and their Boats B. Ashley

Journey with a Secret X S. Styles

8. HOW MANY HOURS A DAY DO YOU SPEND READING?

	1 None	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ hour	3 1 hour	4 2 hours	5 Over 2 hours		
At the weekend							(4)
On a weekday							

9. DO YOU GET BOOKS FROM A PUBLIC LIBRARY?

1 Never	2 About once a week	3 About every 2 weeks	4 About once a month	5 About every 2 or 3 months		
						(6)

10. DO YOU READ BOOKS FROM A SCHOOL LIBRARY?

1 Never	2 About once a week	3 About every 2 weeks	4 About once a month	5 About every 2 or 3 months		
						(7)

11. LOOK AT THIS LIST OF DAILY AND SUNDAY NEWSPAPERS. PUT A TICK BY THOSE YOU HAVE AT HOME.

Daily Express <input type="checkbox"/> 01	Sunday Express <input type="checkbox"/> 09	<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>(8)</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>(11)</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>(14)</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>(17)</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>(20)</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>(23)</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>(26)</td></tr> </tbody> </table>				(8)				(11)				(14)				(17)				(20)				(23)				(26)
				(8)																										
				(11)																										
				(14)																										
				(17)																										
				(20)																										
				(23)																										
				(26)																										
Daily Mail <input type="checkbox"/> 02	Sunday Mirror <input type="checkbox"/> 10																													
The Guardian <input type="checkbox"/> 03	Sunday People <input type="checkbox"/> 11																													
Financial Times <input type="checkbox"/> 04	News of the World <input type="checkbox"/> 12																													
Daily Mirror <input type="checkbox"/> 05	The Observer <input type="checkbox"/> 13																													
The Sun <input type="checkbox"/> 06	Sunday Telegraph <input type="checkbox"/> 14																													
Daily Telegraph <input type="checkbox"/> 07	Sunday Times <input type="checkbox"/> 15																													
The Times <input type="checkbox"/> 08																														

Write the names of any other papers you have

.....

Are any of these newspapers which you read.
If so, go back and underline them.

12. DO YOU OWN ANY BOOKS YOURSELF?

1 None	2 Up to 10	3 Up to 25	4 Up to 50	5 Up to 100	6 Over 100		
							(29)

13. HOW MANY HOURS A DAY DO YOU SPEND WATCHING T.V.?

	1 None	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ hour	3 1 hour	4 2 hours	5 3 hours or more	
On a weekday						<input type="checkbox"/> (30)
At the weekend						<input type="checkbox"/>

14. HOW MANY INTERESTS DO YOU HAVE OUTSIDE SCHOOL TIME? INCLUDE SCOUTS AND GUIDES, YOUTH CLUBS, SPORTS CLUBS, SCHOOL TEAMS, MUSIC LESSONS, ETC.

1	2	3	4	5 or more	
					<input type="checkbox"/> (32)

15. DO YOU READ ANY BOOKS CONNECTED WITH YOUR HOBBIES AND INTERESTS?

2 ☐ YES 1 ☐ NO (33)

16. WHICH DO YOU PREFER TO READ, FICTION OR NON-FICTION?

1 ☐ FICTION 2 ☐ NON-FICTION (34)

17. HOW MANY NON-FICTION BOOKS HAVE YOU READ IN THE LAST 4 WEEKS?

1 None	2 1-2	3 3-5	4 6-9	5 10 or more	
					<input type="checkbox"/> (35)

18. HOW MANY BOOKS OF ALL KINDS DO YOU USUALLY READ IN A MONTH?

1 None	2 1-2	3 3-5	4 6-9	5 10 or more	
					<input type="checkbox"/> (36)

19. DO YOU EVER BUY BOOKS WITH YOUR OWN MONEY?

2 ☐ YES

(37)

1 ☐ NO

If you have answered yes, write down the names of all the books you can remember buying since I last saw you.

☐ (38)

20. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES TELLS HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT ENGLISH LESSONS?

1 ☐ English lessons are my favourite lessons.

2 ☐ I like English lessons but they are not my favourite lessons.

3 ☐ I neither like nor dislike English lessons.

(39)

4 ☐ I dislike English lessons, but they are not the lessons I most dislike.

5 ☐ English lessons are the lessons I most dislike.

21. AT WHAT AGE DO YOU EXPECT TO LEAVE SCHOOL?

Put a tick in the box by the answer you choose.

1 ☐ I expect to leave school at 16.

2 ☐ I expect to leave school at 17.

3 ☐ I expect to leave school at 18.

(40)

4 ☐ I expect to go on to college, university or polytechnic.

APPENDIX IV

The Attitude Scale
constructed and used
in 1977.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
11. I recommend books to my friends.						<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Sometimes I have found a book so funny that I have laughed out loud.						<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Sometimes I have been so moved by a book it has made me cry.						<input type="checkbox"/>
14. I often imagine myself one of the characters in a story I am reading.						<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Sometimes I enjoy a book so much that I do not want to put it down until I have finished it.						<input type="checkbox"/>
16. When I have been working hard at homework I like to pick up a book for relaxation.						<input type="checkbox"/>
17. I like reading.						<input type="checkbox"/>
18. I do not think of myself as someone who reads a lot.						<input type="checkbox"/>
19. I do not chat to my friends about the books I read.						<input type="checkbox"/>
20. I think I will go on reading books for pleasure after I leave school.						<input type="checkbox"/>
						<input type="checkbox"/>

Page 2
Score

Middlesex Polytechnic

THE BROWN TEST OF ATTITUDE TO READING.

By Merrill Brown, B.A.

EXPERIMENTAL VERSION

For use with 2nd year secondary pupils.

Name Score

School

Class

FAVOURITE AUTHORS

APPENDIX 5

Favourite Authors listed in February, 1976.

Times mentioned

10	Enid Blyton
3	Michael Bond
2	C.S. Lewis
2	Noel Streatfield
2	Joan Aiken
2	Ursula Le Guin
1.	Alfred Hitchcock
	Nina Bawden
	A.A. Milne
	Richard Adams
	D.H. Lawrence
	M. O'Hara

14 children listed no favourite author.

Favourite authors mentioned in July, 1976.

8 times	Enid Blyton
4	Michael Bond
3	Desmond Bagley
3	Penelope Lively
2	Richard Adams
2	Alan Garner
2	J.R.R. Tolkien
2	Charles Dickens
2	Joanna Spyri
1	Peter Benchley
	Helen Boyleston
	Frances Hodgson Burnett
	Peter Dickinson
	Ian Fleming
	B. Freeman
	Leon Garfield
	Michael Hardcastle
	James Heriot
	Alfred Hitchcock
	C.S. Lewis
	Ursula Le Guin
	Patricia Lynch
	Alistair MacLean
	A.A. Milne
	A.E. Nourse
	Robert C O'Brien
	Ian Serraillier
	Catherine Storr
	Noel Streatfield
	Rosemary Sutcliff

Favourite authors mentioned in February 1977

C.S. Lewis 3

Noel Streatfield 2

Enid Blyton 2

Robert Graves 1

James Heriot

Nicholas Fisk

Andre Norton

Richard Adams

Joy Adamson

Elizabeth Goudge

Laura Ingalls Wilder

Patricia Lych

Desmond Bagley

Favourite authors mentioned in June 1977

Joan Aiken

Enid Blyton

Desmond Bagley

Catherine Cookson

Basil Copper

Michael Cronin

Robert Graves

James Heriot

Ernest Hemingway

Nicholas Fisk

C.S. Lewis

Andre Norton

Alistair MacLean

J.C. Robinson

Noel Streatfield 2

J. Turner

H.G. Wells

Favourite writers mentioned in February 1978

John Branfield

Isaac Asimov

Agatha Christie

James Heriot

Penelope Farmer

Alan Garner

Penelope Lively

John Christopher

John Wyndham

Antonia Fraser

Henry Treece

Favourite authors in July 1978

Three girls mentioned Noel Streatfield

Mentioned twice.

Desmond Bagley

Agatha Christie

Alistair MacLean

Mentioned once.

Ruth Arthur

Enid Blyton

Alan T. Burgess

Charles Dickens

Gerald Durrell

Ian Fleming

Robert Grayes

Roger Lancelyn Green

Jane Van Lawick Goodall

James Heriot

Josephine Kamm

L.M. Montgomery

Andre Norton

Baroness Orczy

George Orwell

Sylvia Sherry

John Steinbeck

24 children named no authors

11 girls and 13 boys.

Books read in English lessons. 1st Year

<u>Titles</u>	<u>Number of times mentioned</u>	
The Silver Sword	9	*
Elidor	9	
Magnolia Buildings	9	
Smith	8	*
Stig of the Dump	6	
The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe	4	
The Railway Children	4	*
The Otterbury Incident	5	*
A Hundred Million Francs	5	*
Charlotte's Web	4	
Run for your Life	3	
Dragon in the Garden	3	
Moonfleet	3	
The Dream Time	3	
The Weathermonger	2	
The House of Sixty Fathers	2	
Soldier and Me	2	
The Day the Ceiling Fell Down	2	
On the Run	1	
I am David	1	
Tom Sawyer	1	
The Ivory Horn	1	
Emil and the Detective	1	
The Weirdstone of Brisingham	1	
The Hobbit	1	
Huckleberry Finn	1	
A Country Child	1	
The Wind in the Willows	1	
Old Mali	1	
The Yearling	1	
The Goalkeeper's Revenge	1	
Total number of books mentioned	31	

* Used in two schools.

Books read in English lessons. 2nd Year

<u>Titles</u>	<u>Number of times mentioned.</u>	
A Pair of Jesus Boots	11	*
I am David	8	
Carrie's War	8	
Fireweed	6	
Watership Down	5	
Grandad with Snails	4	*
The Silver Sword	4	
Smith	4	*
Devil-in-the-Fog	4	
The Pit	4	
I own the Racecourse	5	
Three Singles to Adventure	3	
On the Run	3	*
Shane	3	
Walkabout	4	
The House of Sixty Fathers	2	
In Spite of all Terror	2	
There is a Happy Land	2	
The Gun	2	
White Fang	2	
Born Free	2	
The Secret Garden	2	
Tales of Greek Heroes	2	
Dragon in the Garden	2	*
Jim Davies	1	
The Hobbit	1	
A Midsummer Night's Dream	1	
David Copperfield	1	
The Strange Affair of Adelaide Harris	1	
Black Hearts in Battersea	1	
The Railway Children	1	
The Little Red Pony	1	
Coco the Clown	1	
Sammy Going South	1	
Kes	1	
Alice in Wonderland	1	
Alice Through the Looking Glass	1	

Total number of books mentioned 37

Books read in English lessons. 3rd Year.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Times mentioned</u>
Joby	5 *
The Day of the Triffids	4 *
Walkabout	4 *
The Goalkeeper's Revenge	2 *
The Trouble with Donovan Croft	2
The Seeds of Time	2
The Diary of Anne Frank	2
Typhoon	1
Watership Down	1
Cider with Rosie	1
Of Mice and Men	1
Animal Farm	1
The Gun	1
Z for Zachariah	1
The Ghost of Thomas Kempe	1
The Family at One End Street	1
First Blood	1
The Outsider	1
Zoo in my Luggage	1
Total number of books mentioned	19